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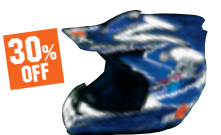
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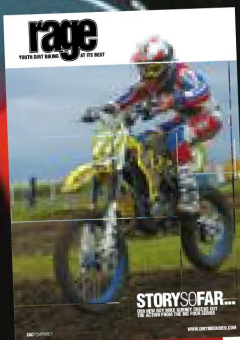
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Two rounds down and Si Wakely's leading the way

September

2007

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DIRTBIKE
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COMMENT

IT'S BECOME a sadly familiar theme in this column but there's no getting away from it – and you see the signs at every event you attend – motorsport is dangerous and every now and again people get badly hurt. The other day when I was cruising the internet MX forums (if my boss asks purely in the interests of research) I came across an interesting thread. In among the standard dumbass posts about getting tattoos and what blinging boots to buy there was a thought-provoking question asking whether advances in safety equipment have resulted in riders being more complacent and taking bigger risks.

There do seem to be more people hurting themselves these days and, tragically, among the broken collarbones and legs there seem to be more cases of serious spinal injuries. There's a good argument that modern tracks – made possible by technical advances in engine development and suspension – are calling for more advanced skills, skills that not everyone's got. In other words the bikes out-perform their pilots. To counter this there's also an argument that says that riders aren't actually getting hurt more often but modern technology's capacity to deliver instant information means when someone does have a big crash everyone knows about it even before the yellow flags have gone out.

The theory that modern safety equipment may give riders a false sense of security is I reckon a pretty valid one. Old-school basics like boots, goggles, gloves and lids are essential in speed events but in recent times they've been joined by knee braces and now – thanks mainly to Dr Chris Leatt – neck braces which have become the latest must-have item. Certainly now, whenever a rider wearing a neck brace has a big crash, they're always quick to say it saved them from serious injury – and that's something that simply cannot be proved. The thing is, whether or not increased protection is leading riders to take more risks, if there are products on the market that can help minimise injuries then – if you can afford them – you'd be foolish not to use them. And that's from club wobblers up to full-on professionals.

Of course, it's a slightly different scenario for professional racers. They're paid to hang it out and injuries are part and parcel of a day at the office. In recent years there have been some high-profile riders whose careers have ended in wheelchairs – GP rider Pit Beirer is one name that springs to mind, as does that of AMA star Ernesto Fonseca.

Last month Ernesto joined up with another rider who was cut down in his prime – '80s legend David Bailey – to host a seminar on stem cell research at the University of California (see story on page nine). The sight of two men who were supreme athletes confined to wheelchairs is a truly tragic, sobering one but the over-riding message from the seminar is one of hope and that's something we must all be thankful for...

Okay, that's enough seriousness for one month so let's paddle into more shallow waters where the mouth-watering prospect of two GPs in Britain in the space of a week awaits us. First up we've got Moneyglass Demesne in Northern Ireland on August 18/19 followed hot on its heels by Donington Park on August 25/26. Both events are on brand-new built-for-the-occasion tracks and both have been strangely low-key in terms of pre-race publicity, leading to the inevitable 'will they, won't they' cyberspace speculation that's usually reserved for the latest Z-list celebrity couple.

Well they're both happening and both could see a 2007 world champion crowned so get your arses into gear, check out our preview starting on page 30, book your tickets and make damn sure you don't miss out on a slice of MX history!

Speaking of champions being crowned, this month's comment wouldn't be complete without mention of Britain's latest world-beater. While Billy Mac's won a GP this year, Swordy's right back on it, Tommy Searle continues to fulfill his potential and Knighter looks all set to strike US GNCC gold, our only off-road world champion in '07 is Michael Brown. The diminutive Top Trial Team Beta ace only went and clinched the trials Junior World Cup at Hawkstone Park's WTC with a display of pure brilliance that underlined his dominance of this year's series.

So top work young

Sean

There'll be no
SX action in Belfast
this year



ODYSSEY OFF!

Belfast International SX takes a year out



AFTER SIX years of packing out the city's Odyssey Arena, Event's 22 boss Matt Bates has pulled the plug on the Belfast International SX.

The cancellation is a bombshell for British SX fans who've come to rely on the event for an annual fix of world-class indoor bar-bangin'. But there is some good news – Events 22 will be back at the Odyssey in '08 with a supercross that Bates promises will carry on the tradition of white-knuckle racing and star names in Northern Ireland's capital city's #1 SX venue.

In a roundabout way Matt has become a victim of his own success. "I've knocked it on the head because I want to take a year out as I'm really busy with lots of other exciting things," says Matt. "But I don't want to turn my back on supercross – I'm going to come back and do it and I've already got a date pencilled in for 2008 at the Odyssey."

In its six-year run The Belfast International Supercross has been a regular sell-out, attracting some of the sport's biggest names and has grown to become a spectacle to rival even the famous Paris Bercy SX. Past winners include Gordon Crockard, Jean-Sebastien Roy and Mike Brown. But the time has come to take a year out while Matt concentrates on other activities including the Youth Elite Cup he promotes alongside pipe

manufacturer DEP.

"There's so much going on at The Odyssey – the venue's proved to be hugely successful since it was built – and you can only supply Belfast with so much entertainment, especially in the period leading up to Christmas," says Matt. "So we're going to take a year out and come back with a bang next year. We've been in Belfast for six years and I've built up a really good event so I don't want to kill it off."

At the moment Matt and DEP boss Craig Elwell are flat-out putting the finishing touches to a unique event that will run at Donington Park on the day after the British GP.

Promoted under the MCF banner, the DEP Elite GP will see 125 and 250cc two-stroke pilots as well as SW85, BW85 and 125cc Senior schoolies take to the full grand prix track for the Bank Holiday Monday races.

"It's just a one-off event to give everyone a chance to race a world championship circuit," adds Matt. "We'll get our boys in and work through the night to fully prepare the track for the following day and make it as race-ready as possible."

Riders can enter by downloading the entry forms from either www.eliteyouthcup.co.uk or www.2strokebritishchampionship.co.uk

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HOPE FOR HEROES!

Bailey and Fonseca host stem cell research seminar

Words and photograph by Steve Cox

ON THE evening of July 24, David Bailey and Ernesto Fonseca – both high-profile MX stars who are in wheelchairs after racing accidents – hosted an event at the Oakley headquarters to support stem cell research being done at the University of California by Hans Keirstead.

Keirstead is the co-director of the Sue and Bill Gross Stem Cell Research Center and associate professor in the Reeve-Irvine Research Center at UC Irvine and he's a pioneer in the use of human embryonic stem cells in the study of spinal cord injuries. Keirstead's laboratory was the first in the world to develop a method to restrict human embryonic stem cells so they generate large amounts of only one cell type in high purity. That type of cell – an oligodendrocyte – insulates connections in the spinal cord, allowing for the conduction of electricity. The treatment has improved mobility in rats with spinal cord injuries and it now is in development for clinical trials.

For the evening Keirstead put together a 50-minute presentation on his research and what he hopes to accomplish in the future in regard to victims of paralysis. What he presented was stunning.

Keirstead explained the difference time can make in the treatment of such an injury, detailing the difference between an acute injury (occurred hours to days ago), a sub-acute injury (days to weeks) and a chronic injury (weeks to years).

Keirstead explained that he has structured his research to deal with the injuries in that order over the last seven years at UCI, starting with acute injuries then moving on to sub-acute injuries and then finally to the biggest challenge, chronic injuries. He talked about how he has been successful in treating the first two in mice and detailed how he did it.

Now he's working on treating chronic injuries. Suffice it to say that for the first time it is a realistic possibility that a treatment for victims of chronic paralysis

may be coming.

"[Keirstead] has made progress and he has done the things that he told me he would do back in 2001," Bailey explained. "Since I was injured people keep talking about 'five or 10 years, five or 10 years' and no results. He gets results. I did put it on the backburner. I didn't think it was even possible for this to happen in my lifetime and if it did I would be too old to even care. But that's changed to where I know I'm going to see this happen and that it may affect me.

"The funding for it isn't nearly what I thought it would be. I figured there would be a lot of resistance from people wanting things to stay how they are because there's a \$10 billion industry around people in the US in wheelchairs... But I decided that I would open my door again and see what I can do to help and that's why I'm here tonight.

"Hans mentioned bladder and bowel function and he mentioned sexual function," Bailey continued. "Imagine when you leave here tonight that that's stripped from you for the rest of your life. That's tough. So you see me doing the Iron Man and you see Ricky James riding his motorcycle and you're like 'dude, these guys are still getting it done'. But behind the curtain, it's difficult... There is nothing that exists right now that can turn this around but meeting with Hans and seeing what he's doing, it's possible and absolutely necessary."

The potential according to Keirstead is enormous. "The new treatment that we are developing is specifically designed for the chronic case – people who have been in chairs for years or decades," Keirstead said. "What do I expect the result of this treatment to be? I would like it to be that every single moving muscle group in the body is re-innervated but I will be happy if we could restore function to those few muscle groups that are most important to the life and lifestyle of the patient."

David Bailey, Jamie Little and Ernesto Fonseca listen as Dr Keirstead delivers his presentation



© Suttty



Future West are the people who brought you Mike Alessi

FUTURE DATES

SX series gets ACU backing

THE NEWS that Events 22's Belfast International Supercross will take a year out could be softened for some (but not Stevie Mills who isn't allowed to leave Ireland) with the announcement of Future West's forthcoming SX series.

A provisional four-round calendar has been released with the show getting on the road at Sheffield's Hallam FM Arena on November 3 followed by a two-night stand at the Liverpool Echo Arena on January 25/26 before the series signs off at Wembley Arena on March 1. The series carries ACU British championship status and will feature classes for Pro and Clubman Open and Lite riders plus youth Auto, 65cc SW85, BW85 and Lites.

"This year will be the start of a long-term period of stability for supercross in Britain," reckons Future West's John Hellam. "We have entered into an exclusive long-term agreement with the ACU, we are now experiencing great co-operation between our two organisations.

"This year we feel we have three of the best venues in the country with ample space between each date to avoid over-saturation. Expect to see the best available supercross riders from all over the world racing alongside the UK's very best up-and-coming riders. Our long-term commitment to our youth and amateur riders will continue as they are key to a successful future."

Sheffield tickets are now available from the Hallam FM Arena box office on **0114 256 5656** and early birds can also book their seats for Liverpool by calling **0844 8000 400** or online at **www.accliverpool.com**

For more information and regs hook up to **www.fwsx.com**

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On the cover: Tanel Leok tears up the track at the Italian GP (Magnus Andersson)
Contents: Have you ever wondered what the view's like when you spoon Geoff Walker? (Suttty)

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WIN!

The DVS Hart collection

FLIPPING BIKES and falling head over heels for pop star **Pink** are just two things that extreme sports star **Carey Hart** is famous for but there's much more to the heavily inked 32-year-old than that! For instance, did you know that **Carey's** co-owner of the **Hart** and **Huntingdon** tattoo empire or he has his own signature line of casual clothing carefully constructed by skate shoe company **DVS**?

To celebrate the UK launch of **Carey's** clothing line – the **Hart Collection** by **Carey Hart** from **DVS** – we've hooked up with our very bestest buddy **Stu Clapp** at **Revival Distribution** (www.revivaldist.co.uk) to offer you the chance to win a **DVS Hart collection** of your own. That's **one hoodie**, **one cap** and one pair of **Monument shoes**.

All you have to do to be in contention of claiming the prized prize is head over to www.dirtbikerider.com and answer the oh-so easy **Carey Hart** related question. Or if you hate electronics and shiznit we'll also accept

postal entries sent to the address at the bottom. **Carey Hart** was born and bred in the sprawling metropolis of Las Vegas. In which of America's 50 states is Las Vegas situated?

- Is it: (A) Nevada
(B) Nebraska
(C) New York
(D) Ned Flemmbake

When you think you've figured out the answer log on to dirtbikerider.com and follow the links to the competition page and answer it there. Or you can send it to us here (along with your name, address, a daytime telephone number and your preferred size of shoe and hoodie) at **DVS Stuff is So Sexy, DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 4AG**.

The first correct entry picked randomly after the closing date of **September 13** will win the **DVS** goodies.



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Wayne Smith leads the British thumper champs

MONSTER MUNCH!

Hucklebridge wins in Cumbria but it's Smith who looks good for thumper crown

DEAN MOOR near Whitehaven, up in the wilds of Cumbria, is the venue for round six of the British Fourstroke and U21 champs on a day that threatens rain that – thankfully for once – stays away.

In the thumper division it's another day of mixed fortune for Pioneer Yamaha star Brad Anderson and it looks like the current defending champion is all but out of the title hunt. Always fastest at every round, bike gremlins have robbed him of what should have been an excellent season results wise.

Anderson leads race one until the bike fails which in turn allows the chasing pack to take advantage and it's fast, close racing behind with the MotoXtreme Kawasaki of Mark Hucklebridge taking a fine win from Albion KTM's Jordan Rose and the Wiseco Honda of Jody Smyth.

The second race is all about Ando as his Yamaha disappears into the distance as soon as the gate drops. Behind him is the race that's beginning to shape up for championship honours with the Monster coming home second ahead of series leader Wayne Smith on the PAR Homes Honda. With two rounds remaining Smith looks firm favourite to clinch the crown with a 44-point buffer over Hucklebridge.

The U21s is again packed full of close and exciting racing and it's Elliott Banks-Browne – relieved of grand prix duty to take in this round of the U21s – who dominates.

Molson Kawakaki's Ray Rowson – who's set the pace all season – has found his match and the Swift Suzuki rider wins both races and has to pass Rowson on both occasions to do so. Alex Snow makes it a second yellow machine on the podium but as far as the

Series standings

Fourstrokes

1 Wayne Smith 303 points, 2 Mark Hucklebridge 259, 3 Brad Anderson 240, 4 Jody Smyth 232, 5 Danny Smyth 200

U21s

1 Ray Rowson 351 points, 2 Jamie Law 251, 3 Kristian Whatley 215, 4 Ashley Greedy 206, 5 Luke Remmer 183

GORDON CROCKARD

CRASH COURSE!

GORDY'S HAVING TROUBLE STAYING ON TWO WHEELS – GOOD JOB HIS SWEDE'S SAFE IN A SHOEL...

WORDS BY GORDON CROCKARD

YEAH, WHITBY was more like Whetby – such a shame for the club and all involved in putting the event on. I enjoy the track there a lot and felt I could win. I qualified third and got the holeshot only for Billy 211 to get through on the inside of the exit of turn one. Second on lap one is still okay in terms of trying to win the moto but crashing on lap one and restarting the race in last is not okay when you have visions of winning.

The crash was a surprise to me – as I landed off a jump into a tight turn the front end just washed out which makes me think that maybe I landed on a rock. I rode my best and finished fifth which I can't complain about seeing I was last on lap one. Then, towards the end of the second MX2 moto, the heavens opened and it was raining so hard for us that they stopped the race.

Factory Phil who mechanics on my bikes managed to injure himself pretty good on the Sunday morning at Whitby. His foot slipped off when he was starting the bike and he ran his calf muscle right along the kickstart. He was in a lot of pain and spent the morning in hospital getting stitched up but being a bit of a trooper he came back and hobbled around doing what he could but I reckon he was only able to do that because of the anaesthetic.

Sadly he then picked up a severe infection and spent the next 10 days in hospital so he missed the Italian GP. My thanks go to Geoff Davis at PAR Honda for getting my bike to Italy and preparing it and I'd also like to say thanks to my long-time friend Michael Gibson who saved me a major headache by mechanicing for me in Italy at short notice. So to Geoff, Gibber and Gavin – thanks Team G!

It was so hot in Italy it was almost painful – it was like riding around on a Aga! When I saw the track I thought it looked cool and riding it was good fun but I didn't enjoy the style in which it was maintained over the weekend. My opinion falls on deaf ears so I won't say too much but I personally disagree with how the tracks are prepared – the racing as a show suffers and for the riders it really sucks!

We flew back from Italy with one of the many cheap economy airlines – Jet2.com. At check-in for the Belfast flight I was surprised to see former Ferrari F1 driver Eddie Irvine behind me in the queue. He certainly made an effort to fit in with the other economy fliers as his appearance was like a man who'd just got off a desert island – long, tatty grey hair and homeless-style clothing was the look he was running and you'd need to know him to recognise him. The guy was recently listed as Northern Ireland's eighth richest man – his last girlfriend was Pamela Anderson for crying out loud – and he's flying on an economy airline he could afford to buy!

He couldn't have picked a worse flight either as on our approach to Belfast the pilot announced we were diverting to Dublin as the runway was flooded. Then the captain decided to land at Belfast City Airport but we couldn't disembark because they don't have customs etc as it's a domestic airport. After refuelling which took an hour we were going to head to Dublin which would be a nice two-and-a-half hour drive back home but thankfully the weather at Belfast International had improved enough to land there. So, as you can see, not exactly the lifestyle of the rich and famous but at least we were home alive – although I'd be surprised if Eddie ever goes Jet2.com again...

After Italy we had a weekend off – the second of the year I might add – and I still managed to go racing only this time I was in a car! I was pumped at the chance to do the race although I didn't really know what I was letting myself in for. National Hot Rod Championship was all I knew and how it came about was through my sponsor Red Bull. Tarmac oval racing in a rear-wheel-drive, 270bhp, 700kg hot rod! It was a serious rush of adrenaline for sure and loads of fun although I was worried about wrecking the guy's car I was in. They tell me they're worth over 40 grand and living off GP prize money I just wouldn't have that kind of loose change...

As I wasn't getting any practice before the race I asked for some advice. "If I give it too much will it spin out?" "Aye!" "If I stand on the brakes will it lock up?" "Aye!" "If I hit the wall will it roll?" "Aye!" "Is it hard to get off the line?" "Aye!" "Is it hard to pass?" "Aye!" "Is it easy to stall?" "Aye!" "Is it good fun?" "Oh aye!" Red Bull were doing some filming and were going to put it on YouTube I think and I certainly enjoyed the experience in full.

Next up on my world travels was Czecho where 10 minutes or so into qualifying I pushed out my first fast lap and had started on my second one only to fall on the big downhill step double. Amazingly I wasn't knocked out but the impact was so great it cut my head open by my temple and split the polystyrene in two inside the helmet. In my eyes a Shoei helmet is the best and I'm glad I was wearing one. I also cut my back and arm and hurt my thumb.

My quali time was 11th but as I was lying on the track getting medical attention I slipped back to 14th! Still not a bad position but my body – mainly my thumb – couldn't do the job in the races. I started both of them but pulled out as I wasn't able to ride well enough. Then, to top the weekend off, the truck beside us reversed into my van on Sunday night and nearly squashed the already hurt Phil and I!

Namur's next – wish me luck!



HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN

Join Billy, Yogi, Crockard, Easty and the gang in Tenerife for the inaugural DEP Race Week this winter

IF YOU'VE been lucky enough to score an entry in either the Elite Youth Cup or DEP two-stroke motocross championships this summer then you'll know how slickly run and enjoyable MCF-promoted events are. So if we told you that the fun can continue right into the darkest depths of winter then you'd be super excited to see what the score is right?

Well the score is this... From November 29 to December 6 MCF will be hosting an amazing MX package vacation in the all-year-long holiday hotspot that is Tenerife. The plan is that you and all your mates, family or whoever can fly to Tenerife, take part in an awesome race day – the DEP Rider Cup that will feature some top pro riders – then relax for the remainder of the break in one of Europe's #1 holiday destinations.

The race itself will take place at the awesome Circuito De San Miguel – check out the video section at www.dirtbikerider.com for onboard footage – which has been likened to a super intense version of the Irish GP circuit at Desertmartin. With its superb sprinkler system the San Miguel circuit's sandy surface is always in tip-top condition with its hills and jump-filled layout encouraging hard racing.

Other attractions on the island include trail riding excursions with motocross365.com, karting, camel trekking, deep sea fishing, mountain biking and there's always plenty of watersports action to be had or if you don't fancy being so energetic you can always abuse your liver in one of the island's many bars!

Places on the DEP Race Week are filling up fast so log on to www.2strokebritishchampionship.com today to download an entry form and get all the essential information on this awesome event!



CURSE OF THE KIWI!

Being buds with Ben's a bad thing...

WHILE THINGS are going swimmingly Stateside for ex-MX2 world champ Ben Townley – he currently leads the AMA motocross Lites series by a slender two points ahead of his Monster Energy Pro Circuit Kawasaki team-mate Ryan Villopoto – some of his bestest buddies back in Europe have been suffering bad, bad luck.

Let's start with fellow Kiwi and ex-BT housemate Josh Coppins. Coming into round 11 of the MX1 world series at Loket in the Czech Republic, JC held a commanding 107-point championship lead on the Factory Yamaha but that was soon whittled back to 77.

After suffering a race one DNF due to a stone sticking under his rear brake pedal, jamming the rear stopper on – how often does that happen? Not often – moto two saw Lizzard no-score in a much more dramatic way. "When I went to brake going down the hill there was nothing there," claims Josh a couple of days later. "I thought about jumping the fence but I knew there was a ditch there so I laid the bike down and it threw me back first into the fence – the impact snapped my shoulder blade in half."

While it's possible that JC will return for the Irish GP on it's expected he'll be feeling far from fit and may well have a scrap for the series win on his hands if Suzuki's Steve Ramon – who currently sits second – can pile on the points in Namur and take advantage of Josh's discomfort.

Meanwhile another of Townley's chums, the man who gave him the picture inscribed with the unforgettable legend 'To BT Buddies 4 Ever' at Ben's last ever GP – that's Red Bull KTM's Tyla Rattray in case you haven't figured it out yet – is another to suffer the Curse of the Kiwi in Loket.

After coming back to eighth after a first turn fall in moto one to further strengthen his third place in the MX2 series, Styla's taken out once more in turn two of race two and picks up damage to his ACL, lateral ligaments and meniscus. The injury – which is serious enough to require surgery – is bad enough to end Rattray's 2007 season.

"This is obviously a major disappointment for me," reckons Tyla. "I can put weight on my leg and walk but my doctor explained that the knee was not strong enough to race and could give way at any moment causing more mess."

"I can't believe my bad luck and that another season is going to end on the operating table. I hope to have a more advanced procedure done on the ligaments that will make them stronger but will add another month onto the recovery time."

Victim three of the curse is Marshfield's premier 25-year-old motocross racer – Molson Kawasaki's Tom Church. Muncher – another of BT's very closest buddies – doesn't even make the start in Loket after suffering some strange goings on...

"The organisers somehow put me in the wrong heat and I had to go last to the line," explains Tom. "The start at Loket isn't exactly the fairest and I had to come through from the back of the pack. I reached 12th and tried to pass the next rider but nearly crashed, got overtaken and ended up 14th. In the LCQ I tried all I could and was not far off but I was feeling a bit stiff from a crash I had in the morning and didn't make the cut."

The fourth and final victim of the Curse of the Kiwi is Fro System's very own Mark McCann, an ex-sponsor of that man Townley. "I couldn't believe it," claims a close friend of the white-toothed one. "After he'd finished watching the race on Eurosport Mark put the kettle on to make a nice cup of tea then found he'd only gone and run out of milk. Ooh what a kerfuffle!"

So there you have it people, befriend BT at your own peril – you have been warned!

STEPHEN SWORD

LEAPS AND BOUNDS!

AFTER A YEAR ON STICKS SWORDY'S COMEBACK IS GATHERING MOMENTUM AND ALMOST GETS HIM A PODIUM IN CZECHO

WORDS BY STEPHEN SWORD PHOTO BY SUTTY

IS EVERYONE enjoying the summer here in the UK? Like me you're probably not although I must say I feel quite lucky as I've not been flooded out of my house yet!

Things are progressing well with racing and each week I feel more comfortable and confident. Whitby was a new track for me as I was racing the Dutch championship in '05 and I was out injured last year. I really enjoyed riding it – the jump sections were cool and the conditions were perfect. Well almost perfect – the second MX1 race wasn't so good as it hammered down with rain.

The day showed improvement for me as I qualified fifth, had 10th in race one and seventh in race two. It was good to get into some battles with other riders and be closer to the front than I was at Desertmartin.

Italy was the following week. I worked a lot on my speed in practice that week as I felt that was where I was lacking the most. Jodie and I left the rain at home and flew straight in to 36 degree heat. It was obviously hot out on the bike so staying hydrated was very important. I started taking a lot of fluid in on the Thursday before the race as on the day is not enough. Little and often is best and I'm lucky to be sponsored by Science In Sport [outrageous plug – SL] as those guys hook me up with all the energy drinks, powerbars and gels I need.

Saturday was a tough day. I went down in the second corner in my heat race and came from last to 13th but only the top 12 qualify so I went to the LCQ. In this I qualified third and was happy to be racing in my first GP since my accident.

I set myself the goal to get some points but after going down again on the first lap of moto one I set myself the target of getting back into the points! I stayed strong and had good lap times towards the end and finished 17th so I was happy with that.

In the second race I got around the first lap and was in 14th with about 15 minutes left to go until I slipped off in a corner and hurt my thumb – which I tweaked in Saturday's heat race – making it difficult for me to continue so I pulled in. I was disappointed not to score in both races but had to be happy that I got some points.

On the Saturday it was Hot Tub's birthday so the team threw a party. Other mechanics and riders came to join in and we had a good laugh.

The next week I was going to do the British Masters at Foxhill but they had to cancel because of the rain. My dad was building a wall in my garden so we just cracked on with that.

I managed to get some good practice in during the following week leading up to the Czech Grand Prix. The GP itself went well for me. Finishing sixth in my qualifying heat meant I didn't have to go into the LCQ, which was nice. I set myself a goal of finishing in the top 15 twice and with a 10th in race one followed by a fifth and fourth overall I achieved that! The result was great but I was especially happy with my riding.

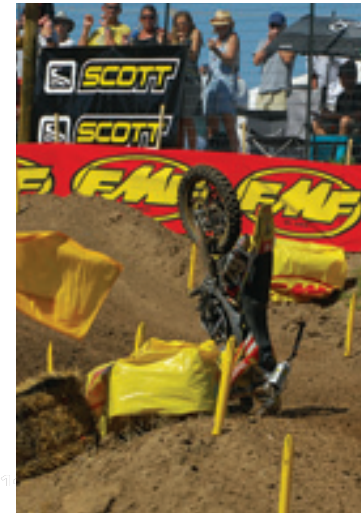
I'm really looking forward to the the British GP at Donington as it's always good to have the home fans cheering you on. Also the next British round at Brampton should be good – it used to be my local track when I lived in Scotland.



Dungey Jumping!

BRAP-BRAP-BRAP-BROLLOCKS!
In the heat of a race monster
stoppies are always hard to control
as Makita Suzuki's Ryan Dungey
finds out to his cost – well, it's either
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Photo: Steve Cox





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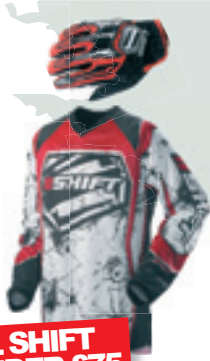
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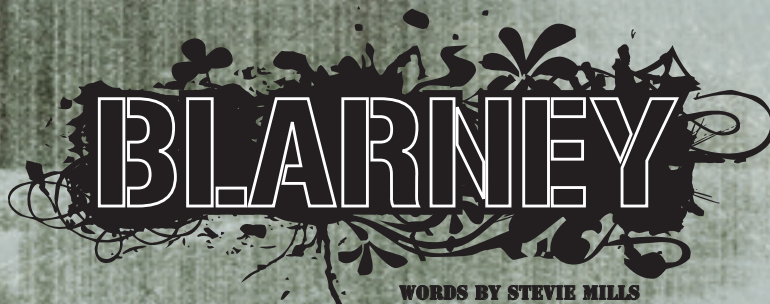
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GP FEVER!

WITH THE GP OF NORTHERN IRELAND JUST ROUND THE CORNER, STEVIE CHECKS OUT THE FORM OF THE LOCAL HEROES

THE GRAND Prix of Northern Ireland is only days away and it's shaping up to be the jewel in the crown of the MX calendar – personally I can't wait to see that diminutive Italian Tony C whip his way around the all-new spectacular venue at Moneyglass.

Just as we thought fellow Yamaha pilot Josh Coppins had his name firmly engraved on the MX1 silverware, the New Zealander binned it big time in the Czech Republic and recorded two DNFs on the day as well as putting himself out of action for Namur. With plenty of points still to play for Josh can little afford any more no-score GPs but he should be back for Ireland to defend his title lead.

And what about the home grown talent? It is important that there's Irish interest in this event – the punters need a local focus – and as always we'll be looking in the direction of the Crock Star. Moments of magic in Germany and Italy have earned Gordon Crockard most of his 2007 points tally so far and for sure the home advantage lifted him at the recent British championship round at Desertmartin where he collected second overall, taking the shine off Billy Mac in the process. GC has not had an exceptional GP weekend for quite a while – I hope this new venue will provide the platform to lift Ireland's best up the hot list for a job in 2008.

Heading towards the famous Namur circuit in Belgium, GC holds 18th in the points table and the Citadel track has been good for Gordy in the past – let's hope he arrives for the next round in Ireland with a good result under his belt and a fire burning in his belly!

The move back to MX2 for Martin Barr has been well documented and Ulster's brightest hope in this class has struggled with qualification at GP level. But Marty's scored enough points to break into the top 30 riders in the world with several top 15 finishes to his credit. Yes, I am sure the two local heroes would have preferred to race the world's best around Desertmartin but with the des Nations on the cards for 2008 the people with the chequebook required 'better infrastructure'.

Now while it's a foregone conclusion that every red-blooded, hardcore motocross fan will be at Moneyglass Demesne on August 19, why is the GP being held on the same weekend as possibly the biggest motorcycling event in the Irish calendar? Yep, it's the MX GP versus the Ulster GP road race which as well as a huge fan base just happens to boast FREE admission. It's David against Goliath all over again and if the two-wheel fans opt to save their money and check out the Tarmac boys then the potential spectator numbers will tumble.

On the domestic front, Ulster and Irish championship rounds have been disrupted by the constant rain with the Irish round at Tandragee being rescheduled for late summer – December 24! Sorry, I couldn't resist that, it's actually been rescheduled for a date still to be confirmed...

In the Ulster MX2 champs it's the Moto-One/Intouch KTM team leader Wayne Garrett heading the table by 84 points from Tommy Merton's Rainey Bros Honda. In fairness Wayne has not put a foot wrong in the more competitive class, never out of the top three and taking five moto wins along the way. Third in the Premier class, a mere six points adrift from Merton, is teenage Moto-One rider Graeme Irwin. Who, incidentally, is a Grade B rider which again asks the question why, when 24 riders were on the line at the last Ulster round, do we need a Grade B championship?

Ulster MX1 is pretty much the usual suspects – Garrett from Merton with Mike Sinton on the GOMX/Russell's Honda taking a battering last time out at Seaforde. Still third in the points, Sinton had a day to forget on the hillside circuit where a crash in both races has put the brakes on his title aspirations in this series.

Roy Bruce has been cracking on with fund-raising for young Chris Esler with top prizes being a new Suzuki RM125 and a trip to cheer on the Irish des Nations squad at Budds Creek. So buy your ticket today – they're available at most motocross events and shops throughout the province. "I really want to thank Russell's Motorcycles, Getaway Travel and Wulfspor's Roger Magee who have all been more than helpful with organising tremendous prizes," says Roy. "And another big thanks to all the members of the MCCNI who collected prizes."

Team manager for the des Nations is none other than Stephen Russell (that will teach you to do a good job mate – you keep getting the gig again and again). Heading the Irish challenge in the USA will be GC and Wayne Garrett on MX1 machines and Marty Barr on a 250F while Tommy Merton is team reserve.

Well done young Stuart Edmonds! The Electraction/CCM Motorcycles TM pilot is making big waves in the hugely successful DEP two-stroke series. Stuart blasted his TM to the overall win last time out at round six of the series which took place just outside Salisbury.

A big 'get well soon' goes out to Kyle Swift this month. Swifty busted both legs practising a week or so ago. You never do things by halves mate!

Stevie

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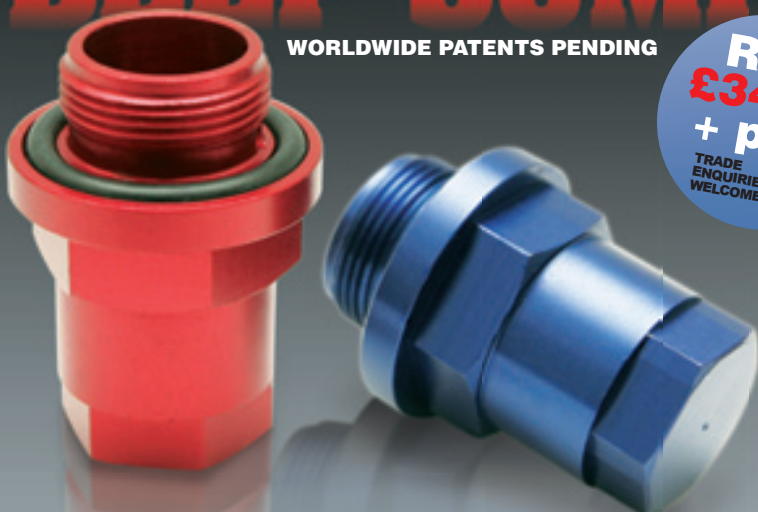
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JONTY'S BOX

WORDS AND PHOTO BY JONTY EDMUNDS

BLUE SKIES!

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT FOR HUSQVARNA FOLLOWING THEIR TAKE-OVER BY BMW

IT WASN'T all that long ago that sports car manufacturer Lamborghini had a serious image problem. While their cars possessed Italian flair by the bucketload, were eye-wateringly quick and beautifully styled, they were also impractical, unreliable and had a less than well-oiled dealer network...or so I've read. Not that long ago Lamborghini built no more than 250 cars each year.

Then in '98 Lamborghini were brought by Audi, part of the VW group. German order was integrated into the Italian marque and things started to change. Lamborghini cars became more reliable and the company started producing new models with the range-topping Gallardo launched in '03. Today Lamborghini produce some of the world's most desirable luxury sports cars.

The VW group – or Lamborghini for that matter – has little to do with BMW's take-over of Husqvarna motorcycles and I'm not for one moment suggesting that the problems that afflicted the then beleaguered car company are shared by Husky. But the opening two paragraphs give a real-life example of how a German buy-out of an Italian company can produce very positive results. Which is exactly what most are hoping, some even praying, will happen to Husqvarna now that they are owned by BMW – the most German of German companies and also Europe's largest motorcycle manufacturer.

While Lamborghini and Husqvarna have little in common there are a few similarities that can be drawn between Lamborghini's past situation and Husqvarna's present day state of affairs. Equally, while the VW group aren't BMW they are both successful German automotive manufacturers and as such it can be assumed – and hoped – that their plans for Husqvarna will be equally as ambitious, well managed and ultimately successful.

Husqvarna's present day products are anything but impractical or unreliable and their dealer network is certainly well-oiled. But Husqvarna – due to financial 'issues' in recent years, failed buy-outs, diminished racing successes and a reduced new model development programme – have developed a bit of an image problem. While the products they produce are

well built the company's money troubles have stopped it blossoming into the much celebrated and dominant brand it once was. While several different companies have invested in Husqvarna over the past few years in the hope of getting the company well and truly back on track, one thing throughout those years remained the same – the company's upper management. Which, according to some, is exactly why Husqvarna have failed to really move forward in the past five years.

That is now going to change. Just like with Lamborghini, German management – world renowned and ruthlessly efficient – will now sit alongside Italian creativity and motorsport passion which can only be a good thing for Husqvarna. In the hands of Europe's biggest motorcycle manufacturer, Husky have the potential to stabilise, grow and flourish.

Of all the unanswered questions surrounding BMW's purchase of Husqvarna two immediately spring to mind. Firstly, why did BMW decide to buy Husqvarna? And, secondly, at a time when they themselves have just produced their first 'proper' off-road bike, what are their plans for the company?

So far the only question that has been officially answered is that BMW plan to continue to operate Husqvarna as a 'separate enterprise'. In effect Husqvarnas will remain as Husqvarnas and BMWs will remain BMWs. But why BMW have decided to buy Husqvarna nobody knows for sure.

One thing many believe has prompted BMW to invest in the off-road game is KTM – Europe's largest off-road motorcycle manufacturer. Having gone from strength to strength in the past 10 years the orange brand now not only dominate the global enduro market but are also seen as the fifth manufacturer of MX machines alongside the Japanese big four. Now add to that their domination of events like Dakar, their ever-expanding road bike line and their successes in GP road racing and it's easy to see why BMW might want to expand from road into off-road, just as KTM are expanding rapidly in the opposite direction.

But while KTM's successes in recent years may have opened BMW's eyes to the size and potential of the off-road market, in buying

THE TAKE-OVER BY BMW COULD BE JUST WHAT THE HERR DOKTOR ORDERED FOR HUSQVARNA



Husqvarna they will also have access to a global off-road sales network. Something that could be very handy when it comes to the distribution of their as yet unreleased own brand of off-road motorcycles.

Husqvarna, although not the off-road powerhouse they once were, have huge potential as a company which is obviously a key reason why BMW chose to buy them. Let us not forget that it wasn't all that long ago that Husqvarna were winning motocross world championships thanks to the efforts of Chicco Chiodi in the late '90s and were the dominant player in the WEC no less than five years ago.

While the take-over, moving in and then setting up of the new German-owned Husqvarna company will inevitably take some time, word is already seeping out from Varese that BMW have a very clear and as yet unannounced plan for growth and expansion in the coming years.

Husqvarna might be a relative minnow in terms of the number of bikes they build annually in comparison to BMW but so too were Lamborghini when Audi brought them a little under 10 years ago.

And just look where Lamborghini are now...



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110/100-18 VRM140R	£31.84
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GOT SOMETHING TO SAY? WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT...

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk. All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our star prize – this month we're sure you'll agree a rather fetching pair of brown skate shoes that are named the Capital!



MOANIN' MARTIN!

I'm sick and tired of people moaning about our sport and I'm not just on about those 'pillars of community' who make it their mission in the tail end of their sorry little lives to try and get tracks shut down. They'll blame excess noise or billowing dust clouds although it's more likely they're upset because they don't like the idea of anyone but themselves having fun in 'their' countryside but I'm not on about them because it seems that the biggest moaners in motocross are the participants themselves...

Tracks are too rough or too smooth, there are too many or not enough jumps and it's either always too wet or too dusty – it's all getting too much! There used to be a time when lads and their dads would turn up and battle it out on natural tracks that had a bit of everything in and they'd enjoy it.

Now, unless a club lays on a freshly-graded GP-standard raceway with hard standing pits and jumps just the way little Jimmy likes them it seems that people will slate the track, the club, the medics, the weather or whatever.

I've only recently got back into the sport myself but I have seen some amazing occurrences at schoolboy club meetings that have made my blood boil. Rude kids, ruder parents and just a general lack of respect for facilities and club officials – I even witnessed one auto rider shower a marshal with obscene verbal abuse just because he hadn't picked him up quickly enough. Forget everything you've read about child protection, it seems like it's the clubs' volunteers who need protection from the kids and their parents!

Of course it's not all bad and motocross is still the best sport on earth but I just felt I needed a little rant. And yes I know moaning about moaners is kind of hypocritical but it does take one to know one right?

Martin, Wiltshire

Cor blimey guvner that was one hell of a rant but that's what this page is here for so you crack right on. You've raised some very valid points and you are of course entitled to your opinion – if anyone agrees or disagrees with Martin then please write in and let us know!

BEACH BLASTER!

My name is Simon Lees and I'm writing to you to ask for as much publicity as possible to help me raise money for Leukaemia Research. I am taking part in the Weston Super Mare Beach race on October 21 and will be riding in aid of Leukaemia Research. I have created my own website which you can log on to at www.riderappeal4leukaemia.webeden.co.uk that explains why I'm raising money for them.

I originally set my target at £1000 but I'm near to reaching this already so I'm going to raise the bar and try for £2500. Who knows, with your help, maybe I can reach this and have to raise it again?

As an added bonus I have designed a replica race shirt of the one I will be wearing on race day which will be auctioned off at a later date. The shirt has been doing the rounds at the Maxxis British motocross championships, the Moto GPs in both Germany and America and will also be signed by John McGuinness and a few others time permitting. I'm currently waiting for the shirt to come back from the USA so I can update my website with the full list of GP riders who have signed it.

Simon, via email

Good luck with the race and don't forget to let us know how you got on and how much money you raised...

WHAT SHOP?

I'm 12 years old and I race a 1997 Kawasaki KX100. I have only raced for a month or two and I'm thinking of buying a new bike for next season or when I can handle the bike I have got at the moment. I am thinking of getting a Honda CRF150R. What I need to know is what is the cheapest shop to buy bikes and parts from?

Rreece, Dorset

Your best bet for cheap bikes, parts and quality service is your local reputable off-road dealer, if you can't find one who advertises in DBR then check out weekly publication T+MX news. Once you find a dealer strike up a good relationship with the guys there and you'll be set for life. Yes, it's often cheaper to buy online but who are you gonna turn to when you need emergency parts the Saturday afternoon before a race? Look after your local dirt bike dealer and they should look after you too. Good luck with your racing and remember it's all about having fun – if you're enjoying yourself the results will come!



JOIN OUR CLUB!

I'm writing in to tell you about NLSQBC which is a recreational off-road club run for and by the members. It was formed by Bob Reid as a result of the misuse of motocross and quad bikes in North Lanarkshire and the surrounding areas.

Bob has tackled the issue of illegal off-road biking and created a fantastic club for youngsters to enjoy their sport. The North Lanarkshire Scramble and Quad Bike Club (NLSQBC) has been running for five years now thanks to dedicated parents who offer their time as volunteers to oversee a great day for kids.

Later this year Bob will take his challenge to the Scottish Parliament to further raise the need for a dedicated centre in Scotland designed for motocross. My son has been a member for three years and has come on leaps and bounds thanks to the support given by everyone at the club. Carry on the good work everyone and see you at the next event. Visit our web site at nlsqbc.com

Ray, Scotland

TEAM TEE?

Hey, can you tell me where I can get my hands on one of those Yamaha team mechanic shirts? By the way, great mag – I buy every issue!

Gwion, Wales

Check out www.bikeit.co.uk for your team mechanic shirt as they're the official vendors of all Bike-it Dixon Yamaha team clothing. Good luck!

QUICK QUESTION

I currently own a YZ125 and I keep getting smoked by the riders in my class. All my friends say I should get a four-stroke but I'm worried about the rebuild cost if it goes bang. Do I really need a four-stroke bike to race competitively at local level?

Dan, Lancashire

Unless you're racing the GPs then the quick answer is no. It is probably true that four-strokes make getting around a track a little easier for the average rider but there's no reason why you can't cover the ground as quickly on a two-stroke. If you need proof of how well two-stroke bikes can be ridden in anger then take in a round of the DEP series where you'll see the best motocross racing around!



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Price: £14.99

Supplier: dremeleurope.com

0844 7360107



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If you like a lot of skulls and wings on your girlie clothes check out the latest batch of ladies tees - including this rather nice Evil Angel one - from Hu-I Design Corp now!

Price: £16.50

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SPIDER M1 GRIPS

Spider M1s are a super-tacky, shock-absorbing handlebar grip for your off-road ride of choice and come in complimentary colours for each and every brand of motorcycle - yup, even all those obscure Chinese bike manufacturers too. Check 'em out at baselinelracing.com

Price: £11.49

Supplier: baselinelracing.com

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SUNLINE ARC ARC RC CLUTCH LEVER/PERCH

Used by Molsen Kawasaki's GP racers Tom Church, Stephen Sword and Gareth Swanepoel, this Sunline ARC clutch lever/perch assembly with hot start is about as trick as it gets when it comes to left-hand lever action.

Price: £129.99

Supplier: sixsixone.co.uk

01792 467467

RACETECH VERTIGO HANDGUARDS

Hands are fairly fragile things to place at the front of a speeding motorcycle while mud, rocks and dirt are thrown up into their path. That's why it's never a bad idea to fit some handguards - like these Racetech Vertigo jobbies - to your dirt scooter. Available in a range of colours - check 'em out at smartzz.co.uk - these sub-£20 dirt deflectors won't break the bank and should keep your hands safe from breakage too. Yay!

Price: £19.50

Supplier: smartzz.co.uk

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MADHEAD NECK SUPPORT

With neck supports becoming more and more popular among off-road racers worldwide a relatively new dirt bike brand – Madhead – have added their contribution to the battle against spinal injury to the market. Available from Get Geared now this type of realistically priced support has been proven to help prevent injury – read August's Rant – so get on to getgeared.co.uk and order yours today!
Price: £29.99
Supplier: getgeared.co.uk

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Anyone who has to prepare bikes knows how much it sucks doing air filters – it's a real **** job and no mistake. But now Twin Air have done away with the need to oil new filters by releasing these pre-oiled dual-stage jobbies to the motocross masses. Just whip 'er out of the bag, onto the cage and into your bike before ripping off into the wilderness without the usual blue fingernails...
Price: £12.50
Supplier: apico.co.uk

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Getcha a billion bones you can't break this brake lever! CNC machined from 6061 T6 aluminium for strength and designed to fold upon impact, this adjustable for reach brake lever with ball bearing pivot is built to last. It's been comprehensively tried and tested by the crash happy DBR wrecking crew who – after weeks of trying – are still unable to break this bad boy.
Price: from £47.99
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TM DESIGNWORKS REAR CHAIN GUIDE

Bright green and bulletproof is about all that needs to be said about this TM Designworks rear chain guide for Kawasakis. Completely replacing the stock unit it's much tougher and also has the added bonus of returning to its original shape after an impact. Available for most off-road bikes, the TM Designworks guides are a must for anyone who's serious about racing!
Price: £41.25
Supplier: baselineracing.com

01306 889911



REGINA RX CHAIN

Motorcycle chains aren't meant to be exciting and glamorous but they are meant to be dependable and strong. That's why Regina RX chains are dull as dishwater – except for their shiny gold links of course – and stronger than the smell of Sicilian sausages.
Price: £39.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk

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Price: Jacket £85.99 Pants £79.99
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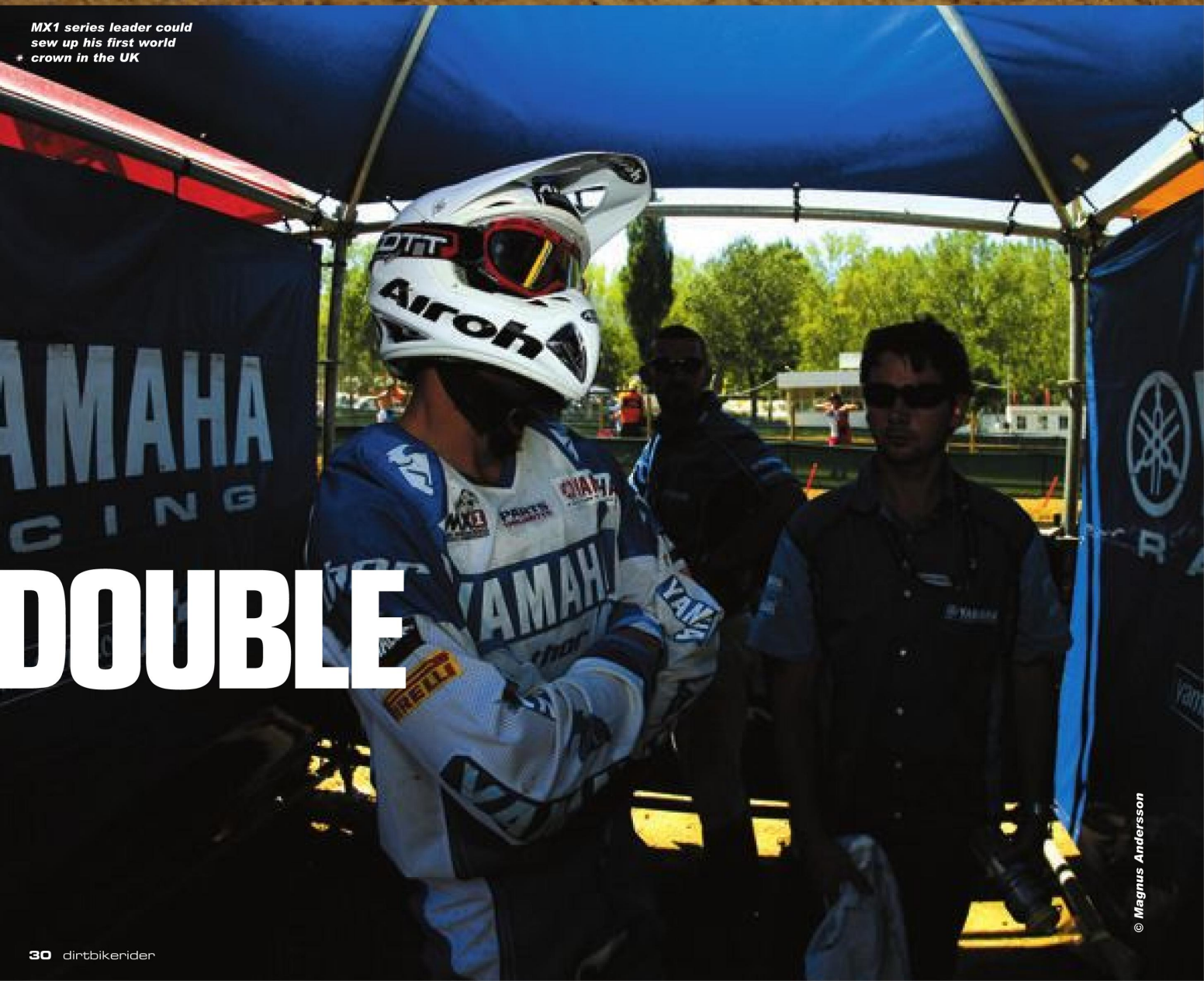
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With back-to-back GPs the UK's set for eight helpings of first corner GP action

MX1 series leader could sew up his first world crown in the UK



DOUBLE

*Italian Antonio Cairoli's
in pole position to regain
his MX2 crown*



MEASURES!

**With two GPs on back-to-back weekends, the UK's
the place to be in August when it comes to world
championship motocross**

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson



© Magnus Andersson

Billy MacKenzie's
Britain's best
bet in MX1

IT'S THAT time of the year again, lads. Tell 'er indoors you're feeling all patriotic and fancy a fortnight's holiday in the UK this August. The world motocross series is coming to town and neither you, nor her ladyship, will want to miss it!

First off there's the Irish GP at Moneyglass on August 18/19 where you'll want to suss out the best place to watch the '08 Nations. Then one week later all roads head to Donington Park as the British GP goes upmarket with hard-standing and running water – hot and cold.

There's nothing like a British – or Irish – GP for atmosphere and this year there are a couple of extra ingredients added in. DBR is genuinely still waiting to confirm whether or not the GOAT will make a guest appearance at either or both races (although don't hold your breath) but one thing we feel pretty certain about is that both world titles will be

wrapped up in the UK this month.

Having given the opposition the blues all summer both Josh Coppins and Tony Cairoli are around 100 points ahead of their closest rivals. It will have taken a real shocker for chasers Steve Ramon or Chris Pourcel to see either Yamaha man wrap it up at Namur and a 50-point advantage on Sunday evening at Donington will be enough to ensure the only title decider at Lierop is for the Women's World Cup.

But both Josh and Tony have spent most of this year winning. And both will still be on the gas in the UK – winners are winners because they are always hungry for more. But their chasers also want to taste more bubbly before the year is out, none more so than defending MX2 champion Chris Pourcel who's unhappy at playing second fiddle so often. And Tyla Ratray's hardly missed the lower rungs of the podium all year but will



Gareth Swanepoel will
be hoping to repeat his
Valkenswaard podium



Tommy Gun gets a
soaking in Sweden

Essential info

Donington Park

More or less slap bang in the middle of the country, Donington Park is near to Nottingham, Derby and Leicester

Exit the M1 at J23a and pick up signs for East Midlands Airport (A453) and brown tourist signs for Donington Park.

From the M6 leave at J15 heading for Stoke-on-Trent and Uttoxeter (A50 bypass). Continue forward on the A50 following signs for Uttoxeter, Derby and later picking up signs for the M1. Continue past Uttoxeter, over the A38 and follow signs for the M1. Leave the A50 at the junction signposted Donington Park, Long Eaton and Shardlow. Take the fifth exit off the roundabout and follow the signs for Castle Donington and the brown Donington Park tourist signs.

From the M5 leave at J4a and join the M42. From the M40 join the M42 northbound at J3a. Continue northbound on the M42. Follow the M42 to J11 where it becomes the A42. Leave the A42 at J14, following signs for East Midlands Airport and the brown tourist signs for Donington Park onto the A453.

On the gate prices are £35 for adults and £15 for children (race day). For details of advance booking discounts and camping prices check out www.donington-park.co.uk or call 08700 429669.



Your support could hoist Barty Marr and Doogs into the top 10

Swordy's back and already on the pace



© Magnus Andersson

Stephen Sword

What the British GP means to me...

"What does the British GP mean to me? It's quite simple really – if I could pick any single GP that I want to win most it's definitely my home GP.

"If I think back to the days of Farleigh Castle and Foxhill before I started GP racing I can remember watching the races and thinking to myself 'this is where I want to be, at the front with all the British fans screaming for me to win'.

"The home support is always awesome and it definitely lifts you before the races. And family, friends and sponsors always turn out at home GPs so that makes you want it even more.

"I'm very much looking forward to this year's British GP as I missed the last one at Matterley Basin due to my injury. Winning my home GP is one of my goals before I stop racing. It's something I would dream about as a kid and still dream about now.

"The closest I've got so far was in '04 on the Isle of Wight with two third places that gave me third overall. Although I didn't win it still felt awesome to be on the podium.

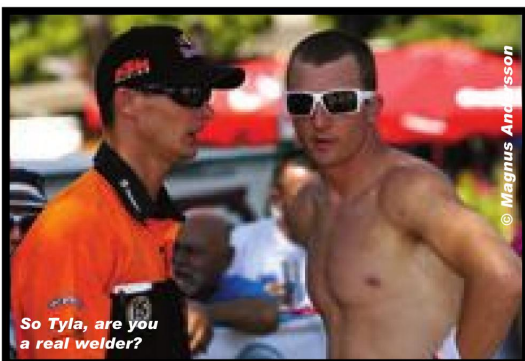
The fans that day were amazing – every inch of the track there was someone cheering me on. You only get that sort of support at your home GP."

You gotta love a bit of bar bangin'



© Magnus Andersson

So Tyla, are you a real welder?



© Magnus Andersson

want to top it at least once before the season's over.

Up in MX1 British champ Ken De Dycker, winner in Sweden, has come on strong in the second half together with CAS team-mate Mike Brown and Seb Pourcel, the elder half of the Gallic double pack who is finally emerging from lil' bruv's shadow. In fact there's actually a whole pack of potential winners every week in MX1 with David Philippaerts, Jonathan Barragan, Kevin Strijbos and Tanel Leok all deservedly on the podium so far this year too. Take your pick for this month's challengers.

But who do we most want to see on the top of the podium? Brits of course! Tommy Searle has advanced still further in his second year on the GP circuit, the icing on a top three moto finish nearly every week having come in Sweden when the 18-year-old became the only person other than Pourcel to take a moto off Tony C.

We all know from Matterley Basin last year that the teenager from Kent can raise his game even more on home turf and now he's decided to stay and race for the world title next year before heading Stateside a double slamming of the Sicilian before the end of the campaign will be just the



A podium would go down pretty well at Moneyglass Demesne for Crock Star fans

Gordon Crockard

What the Irish GP means to me...

"The Grand Prix of Northern Ireland is my home GP and I feel lucky to have the chance to take part as when I started racing the world championship series back in 1997 this country didn't feature on the FIM calendar.

"For seven years I contested the world series without having a home GP so since 2004 I've been enjoying the chance to shine in front of my home fans. In 2004 and 2005 how much I could 'shine' was restricted as injury and machine failure halted my progress. Last year I was fifth in the first race and crashed out of the second on lap one but I was satisfied with experiencing a top five finish in my home race. But a podium is the ultimate dream and 2007 could give me that opportunity.

"The venue for this year's GP on August 18/19 is a new one for every rider so no-one has the advantage of track knowledge. The last three years have all been on sand tracks which suits most of the riders I compete against as many of them are Belgium-based and prefer a sandy surface to any other. Moneyglass I'm hoping will be more of a grassy dirt texture and if left in its natural form will be exactly the type of terrain I enjoy the most. This is down to the fact I was brought up on grassland tracks of a natural nature and I find it easy to ride this type of track well.

"Modern motocross thought seems to be that you must rip up the soil and rotivate the ground to about two feet deep which personally I disagree with and don't enjoy riding so I'm hoping that this won't be the case at Moneyglass.

"The new venue is a massive bonus for the sport in Northern Ireland and I wish the organisers the best of luck – and the best of weather as well!

"See you trackside – and don't forget to cheer for the #13 PAR Homes Honda..."



CAS Honda's fast-starting US import Mike Brown

© Magnus Andersson

tonic in the mind games before the winter break. Can Tommy Gun rattle up his first overall win in front of the UK fans? Of course he can!

The Maxxis MX2 series boasts a dozen GP regulars and all are good for points, some for more. Injury will keep Shaun Simpson on the sidelines but Jason Dougan has already finished top 10 this year, Martin Barr will be looking to break the same barrier in his native Ulster after getting so close a couple of times, Tom Church is having his best-ever season, Carl Nunn knows what it's like to win in the UK, Stephen Sword is already back on GP pace after his lengthy lay-off and both Jake Nicholls and Elliott Banks-Browne have got their names on the scoresheet. Sean Hamblin should be back from his broken scaphoid and Gareth Swanepoel has had many near-misses since his maiden podium at the Valkenswaard opener.

Our main man in MX1 has to be Billy MacKenzie. The undefeated emperor of Japan with three victories in three visits has also tasted success at home. Remember his runaway on the Isle of Wight two years ago? Billy can always dig deeper for the home fans as he proved again at the Nations last September when he got his nose in front for a few corners. The Scot has turned round a jittery start to the year with ever more regular top four slots in France, Sweden and Italy. Those regular top threes can't be far away and a first MX1 win in Europe cannot be discounted.



Shaun Simpson
will miss out on
his home GP

Continental tracks have not always appealed to the other MX1 Brits but James Noble and Gordon Crockard have proved with occasional ripping rides that podiums are not far away while Brad Anderson has impressed with top 20 speed on his rare forays across the Channel. Gordy will be sure to pull out something special at Moneyglass.

So pack the six packs, the grill and the airhorns and get yourself off for the highlight of the British summer. And take your waterproofs too just in case the summer gets too British – but remember, ours is the only sport where the craic is top, come rain or shine!



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Essential info

Moneyglass Demesne

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From Larne Harbour take the A8 passing close to Belfast and Millbrook, following signs for the A57. Take the A57, passing Ballyclare and close to Doagh and turn onto the M2. Continue along the M2, taking the exit signposted for A31 Magherafelt and following the direction for Randalstown. Close to Randalstown take the A6 and after 3km follow directions for the B18 and you have arrived at Moneyglass Demesne.

From Belfast follow signs for the A12 Westlink. On reaching the A12, follow road signs for The North/M2, taking the M2 exiting Belfast. Continue along the M2, taking the exit signposted for A31 Magherafelt and following the direction for Randalstown. Close to Randalstown take the A6 and after 3km follow directions for the B18 and you have arrived at Moneyglass Demesne.

Weekend tickets will set you back £30 with day tickets £20. Under 14s accompanied by an adult get in free. For advance tickets, special ferry deals and more information go to www.nievents.co.uk or call 028 9066 6661.



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THREE KINGS

Are KTM's new trio of thumping enduro weapons up to the task of heisting off-road gold?

ALL TOO often motorcycle manufacturers' new models aren't actually new and instead of delivering a bevy of brand-new beauties to our local dealership they offer up machines with revised this, modified that and a revamped the other. But for 2008 KTM have properly thrown caution to the wind, pushed the boat out and gone the whole nine yards to basically reinvent their bigger bore enduro thumpers while giving their awesome 250F off-road weapon a damn good tweaking too.

Ditching the ever dependable but dull as ditchwater EXC450 and 525s in favour of all-new EXC-R 450 and 530 models is pretty much the best thing KTM could do for its E2 and E3 class warriors. While the old-school big bore EXCs were proven to be performers – both David Knight and Samuli Aro have pushed that point home in the last few years – they were perhaps a little too old-school to be cool when compared to their Japanese class-mates.

It's fair to say that the 2007 EXCs were their '04s but with subtle revisions and improvements, however for 2008 both bikes are brand new – new motors, new chassis, new look and a new R tagged on to their model name EXC-R. That's R for Racing. I like it...

The all-new motor is a four-valve, single cam unit named the XC4. The 450 motor is a half kilo lighter than its predecessor and now runs a shorter stroke and bigger bore than before while the 530 – actually it's a 510 – uses the same bore and stroke as this year's bike. A bigger bore for the 450 means bigger valves can be used and a 50/50 mix of titanium (inlet) and steel (exhaust) valves take care of the freshly charged and spent gases.

At the lower end of the power plant the countershaft no longer runs through the crankcases which helps decrease engine drag and increase oil flow. The motor and gearbox oil are now separate preventing clutch debris contaminating the finer workings of the motor and the best news of all is that there's now only one oil filter to change!

KTM's well tried and tested electric start system is of course fitted on all three bikes meaning one flick of the red button is all it takes to entice the motor to life but, unlike the motocross version, the EXC-Rs and EXC-F retain the kickstart lever as back up.

The chassis on the full range of bikes looks similar to that of the SX-Fs using big fat beams of chromoly steel to join the tidy looking lower frame rails to the top tube while there's a fully removable aluminium sub-frame to the rear.

Suspension is taken care of by WP – that's using 48mm USD forks up front and a PDS shock out t'back. The shock is brand new with a 10mm longer stroke than the one found on the old EXC and now features both high and low-speed compression damping. The forks come with new works style wraparound fork guards for '08 meaning there's less chance than ever of damaging the fork legs or their friction-reducing coating.

The bodywork is mostly borrowed from its motocross cousins and while it may not be to everyone's taste the sleek contours of the rear end certainly do stand out from the pack. The lights at both ends of the bikes are fairly functional although the front beam points way too high to be of any use when night riding – thank god for companies like Trailtech eh?

Aside from the more obvious features one of the biggest improvements is with the stand. KTM stands have been notoriously crap in the past, which has encouraged aftermarket companies such as Baseline Racing to engineer a fix for the foot of the stand which rectifies the problem. The '08 edition now has both a bigger foot and meets the ground at an angle more conducive for keeping the bike upright when parked. Problem solved and dealt with – well in KTM!

As with all full size KTM bikes the quality of componentry is impressive – Neken bars, Renthal grips, Excel rims and a whole host of well engineered KTM parts finish these bikes off in style. Anyway, enough of the drivel – let's get with the riding...



bike test

**KTM's '08 450 EXC-R –
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Light, well-balanced and with a super-strong motor – next year's 250 EXC-F is the business

250 EXC-F

250 EXC-F

Since I'm fairly used to riding KTM's 250EXC-F [Geoff's lucky enough to have one as a long-term test bike] I figured that would be a good place to start. The first thing you notice is how much better the suspension works on the '08 bike – it's much plusher and encourages you to push harder than on the '07 machine.

The revised timing settings and new ignition curve have really helped bring the motor alive too. The difference is amazing and the '08 bike feels so much stronger throughout the range than the '07 – even one with a pipe fitted. And because the motor's so much livelier and free revving it helps the whole bike feel lighter and racier than before.

The Brembo brakes feel very progressive and positive and got better and better the more they bedded in.

The gearing on the EXC-F has always been superb and KTM have wisely stuck with what works as all six gears are usable and well spaced.

Overall the bike feels light and well balanced with the strong motor – I never once felt like I needed more power or was in the wrong gear – making it easy to ride fast for a long period of time. This bike is suitable for all levels of rider from trail rider to pro racer straight from the crate – impressive!

Specifications

250 EXC-F

Capacity: 248.6cc
Bore and stroke: 76mm x 54.8mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Carburettor: Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension: WP 48mm fork
Rear suspension: WP PDS shock
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1481mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 105.7kg



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Touching Your Heart



The 450 power's been spread around a bit more but it'll still bite ya ass!

450 EXC-R

In the past I've never really liked KTM's 450 enduro weapon. It has always been a great bike but the abundance of power has always seemed to make the bike handle a little bit on the strange side – unbalanced maybe.

But the '08 is a much more enjoyable machine to ride. Within moments of jumping on the bike I just had to stop and tell Suttly – who seconds earlier had slipped on a muddy patch and launched his Canon into a prickly bush – just how superb the front forks felt. While he didn't seem all that interested at that point I feel that the new suspension settings and fork leg coating are the absolute *****s and should be shouted about!

The well-balanced nature of this beast encourages you to chuck it into turns hard and it also speeds over rough, rocky and rooty going

with no worries either. As a complete package the handling is very impressive and my hat is off to KTM as they've turned the 450 into a bike I actually enjoy riding.

The new XC4 motor has a tendency to light up a bit on the lively side and break grip in the proper British off-road conditions the bike was tested in. Once you've lost it you ain't getting it back but that's a trait of 450 four-stroke motors in general and not purely a problem with the KTM set-up.

To be fair the motor does seem more controllable than the old 450 as the hard hitting low-end punch of yore has seemingly been spread across the range. In grippy going the new XC4 motor feels infinitely better than its predecessor as it's a much racier set-up than before.



Specifications 450 EXC-R

Capacity: 449.3cc
Bore and stroke: 95mm x 63.4mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Carburettor: Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension: WP 48mm fork
Rear suspension: WP PDS shock
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1481mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 113.5kg



4 EX -R



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Retaining the same bore and stroke as this year's model makes the 530 EXC-R a torquey treat



Specifications

530 EXC-R

Capacity: 510.4cc
Bore and stroke: 95mm x 72mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Carburettor: Keihin MX FCR39
Front suspension: WP 48mm fork
Rear suspension: WP PDS shock
Front brake: 260mm disc
Rear brake: 220mm disc
Wheelbase: 1481mm
Seat height: 925mm
Dry weight: 113.9kg

530 EXC-R

The 530 retains the same bore and stroke as the old bus which means it's still easy to ride smoothly in tall gears. The 510cc motor delivers so much torque it's possible to cover ground super quickly with the motor barely revving above tick over with more noise coming from the slapping of the bike's drive chain than from its tidy looking and sweet sounding silencer.

In some ways this bike feels much smaller than the numbers on the airbox lead you to believe. It handles well and encourages you to crack right on – a perfect blend of man-size power in a well-balanced chassis – getting you to your final destination way quicker than you'd ever expect in a nice pleasurable Sunday ride out kind of way!



For more shots from our test please do call in at www.dirtbikerider.com



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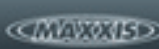
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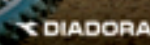
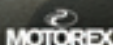
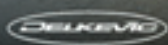
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OILS!

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IS NICEBUT... WHERE'S
ALL YOUR
PRODUCTS?HE TRIED TO
CON ME... SO
I BLEW
HIM OFF.SHE WONT
LAST LONG
WITHOUT
PRODUCTS.

IN THE KITCHEN

COOKED AND
GLUED
TALCUM
POWDER
AND
SALT AND
MARSHESAND WHATS
THAT LOT
FOR...FISH
OIL

NANA

GEAR
BOX

AT THE TRACK

HOW'S SHE
RUNNING?I JUST RAN
HER HARD AS
HELL AND SHE'S
GOOD AS GOLD!

LATER

SHIFF
SHIFFDO I HAVE TO KEEP
TELLING YOU ALL?
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A stylized, handwritten signature of Ricky Carmichael in white ink.

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SWANSONG

The Tony Bou show rolls on and Dougie's dream's dashed as the WTC bids adieu to Hawkstone Park after a hat-trick of hot hits...

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Suttty

THERE'S NO fairytale ending to what's almost certain to be the final trials GP on English soil for Dougie Lampkin as Toni Bou romps to yet another victory to make it eight wins out of 10 starts and open up a virtually unassailable 20-point lead at the top of the table.

But there's still plenty for the British fans who've made the pilgrimage to Hawkstone Park for the third and – for now at least – final WTC round at the famous Salop venue as Michael Brown secures the world Junior title with a crushing display of feet-up finesse.

With the '08 and '09 'British' WTC rounds scheduled for the rocky

shores of Bangor in Northern Ireland, Hawkstone '07 is almost certainly living legend Lampkin's final world championship event in mainland Britain. The dream that he'd sign off on home turf with his 100th trials GP win was always going to be a long shot given his Repsol Montesa HRC team-mate Bou's fantastic form but, in the words of pirate-faced songstress Gabrielle, dreams can come true.

Sadly for Dougie and the travelling army of fans that chase him from section to section, it's more a case of Queen's 'Another One bites the Dust' as after cleaning the opening hazard he's ejected big-style from the factory four-banger for the first of three maximums on his





BRITISH LION

Dougie Lampkin

"I wanted to start real full attack and I didn't do a lot wrong on section two, I just touched the sump and bloody hell it threw me down that quick and then [two sections later] I just got a little bit stuck in the tape so I just went to push it out with my boot like you do a dozen times a year and it touched the silencer and burnt that and that were another five.

"I started really well the second lap and then I had a really, really bad five on section nine and then I've just thrown a few ones about recklessly really. It's a strange place – if you start well here you get flowing and it seems to go well, you get into a bit of a rhythm but that wasn't happening."



BRITISH LION

Graham Jarvis

"I've enjoyed it, that's the main thing – I didn't have anything to prove. I just wanted to come here, put a few good rides in and show what a 320 Sherco can do. I had a bit of an injury just before last year so I'm a bit fitter now but I still need to do a bit more training to keep up with these younger lads!"





BRITISH LION

Alexz Wigg

"The rain last night made it a bit more difficult than I'd have liked but it's been an excellent trial and Michael's ridden very well but I'm just a bit gutted that I haven't done a bit better. There was only one section I thought that maybe the 125 might have struggled on but second lap it flew up there so I don't think there's any excuses. Obviously it's a little harder in places and I have to work a little harder in every section but there were a few rider errors – I was rushing in places where I should have calmed it down."

opening lap. True to form the Yorkshireman digs deep and strings together a solid run of rides that, but for a five on section nine second time round after cleaning it on the opening tour, would have matched the second-best lap-score of the trial.

At the front championship leader Bou and defending champ Adam Raga match each other virtually blow-for-blow before the younger of the Spaniards edges ahead to finish lap one a single mark up – given the heavy overnight rain an amazing five marks lost to Gasser pilot Raga's six. Next best is Sherco's Albert Cabestany on 13 followed by Takahisa Fujinami on 15, Scorpa four-popper rider Marc Freixa on 16 and Dougie on a five-heavy 19.

A stray dab on section two on the second lap from Bou evens scores up before both pace-setters five section five. So far so good for Raga who's won just two rounds this season in defence of his crown but then it all goes tits-up on section six as he casts away two marks to Bou's big fat zero and then appears to lose the mental battle.

The last nine sections of the trial see Bou stay feet-up as Raga

notches up another four marks lost and by the time the pair clean the final man-made hazard of the day the gap's swelled to a decisive six – a total of 11 to Bou compared with Raga's 17.

Last year's Hawkstone winner Fujigas is next home on 23 – his last lap of eight easily the best of the trial but for a maximum on the opening section which is cleaned twice by everyone else in the top 10. Cabestany wilts on his second lap and his final tour total of 17 almost delivers him into the clutches of Lampkin who parts with 11 marks on the last lap. But despite being tied on a total of 30 the fourth place goes to the Spanish star by virtue of more ones after matching Dougie on cleans and fives.

Another three places and 10 marks back from Dougie, the next Brit home is Graham Jarvis mounted on a 320cc four-stroke Sherco. Grimbo, now just an occasional WTC campaigner, is certainly a bit ring rusty when it comes to the top level but he's still got the smarts to finish 24 clear of former Junior world champ James Dabill who's ninth although, to be fair to Dibs, the Future Trial Montesa rider admits to



Albert Cabestany takes fourth



Marc Freixa has a cracking ride of the Scorpa four-banger



BRITISH LION

Ross Danby

"It's been very close – just two points – so I'm a bit disappointed but it's really good to be on the podium. The crowd's been brilliant and cheered me on in sections and got me through them – a good old boost."

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BRITISH LION**Sam Haslam**

"I'm very pleased with today because I made a change of machinery and have been on a Gas Gas for one week and it's obviously a very good result for me. I'd just like to thank my minder Danny for helping out today and my family and John Shirt for sorting a bike out for me."

**BRITISH LION(ESS)****Becky Cook – guest rider**

"It's been good but hard work – really hard work! It's a lot harder than anything I've done. Even the ladies' world championship is not massively hard but it's been good experience for me and I've enjoyed it. Hopefully I can have another go at some time."

**BRITISH LION****James Dabill**

"I started off well and then had three fives in a row on not particularly difficult sections and I just couldn't get my rhythm back – everywhere I were going I were off-line and I just couldn't seem to settle down at all. And then I started the second lap again really good and then had another five on section five and after that once again I couldn't settle down. I had some really slack fives. It's very hit or miss here – there are a lot of big climbs and you're either on it or you're not. There's not an in-between where you can get away with it. I tried my best but obviously it wasn't my day today."

having a disappointingly bad day at the office.

While it's not looking good for home hopes at next month's Isle Of Man-based Trial des Nations with Spain's 1-2-4 at Hawkstone riding roughshod over Britain's 5-8-9, there's every reason for optimism a few years down the line with a killer crop of young guns coming through led by Mighty Atom Michael Brown.

The Scarborough teenager caps a stellar season so far with a massive 15-mark winning margin over new JST Gas Gas convert Sam Haslam to secure the world Junior crown with two rounds still to run. After dropping a miserly five marks on his opening lap Brown ups the ante with a second lap that costs just a single dab on section 13.

Haslam, after just a week to get acquainted with the Gasser, shows flashes of brilliance throughout the day and his second lap total of just six would no doubt be described by new sponsor John Shirt Jnr as "mega, kid"! His final score of 21 is 12 ahead of third-placed Nicolas Gontard with Matteo Grattarola another 10 adrift.

Despite playing his disadvantage down in post-trial interviews, Alexz Wigg is on a hiding to nothing on the slick Hawkstone hillside on a 125cc Gasser against his rivals' much meatier machines. But a fighting fifth after losing fourth on most cleans should more or less guarantee a Junior Cup silver medal at the end of the series before he comes of age and can move up to a man's bike!

And Michael, Sam and Alexz are joined in the top 10 by fellow Brits Lee Sampson in seventh and Richard Ellwood who comes home 10th.

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The Youth Cup crown is also decided at Hawkstone in favour of Spaniard Alfredo Gomez who is put under day-long pressure from fellow Gas Gas pilot Ross Danby. Gomez in effect wins the trial on the opening lap with his total of 10 just two better than Danby. Shirty's top tiddler(!) actually moves into the lead on lap two before a few late-on lapses tie them on nine apiece second time around.

Alexis Cervantes fills the final step on the podium a whopping 24 marks back with current British A class ace Jack Challoner making it two homeboys in the top 10 with a solid sixth.

So after a hat-trick of awe-inspiring L+M Events-run WTC rounds at Hawkstone Park that's yer lot for now – and maybe for ever. Although co-promoter Jake Miller is keeping his cards close to his chest.

"As for the future that's another story," reckons Jake, "and that is a question that cannot be answered at the moment. All I can say is watch this space." You big tease!

 For more Sutt Dawg shots from Hawkstone Park check out the totally free gallery at www.dirtbikerider.com



BRITISH LION

Michael Brown

"It's brilliant! I've been waiting all year for this really. It's a great feeling. I just enjoyed it today, settled down and relaxed and I've rode really well. Hopefully – I'm not sure, I'll have to speak to the team – we'll move up to the top route now for the last two rounds and I'll get some experience for next year. I'd like to thank all my sponsors – there's a lot to mention but they all know who they are – and my family, everyone from Scarborough and my girlfriend Sophie."



Last year's winner Takahisa Fujinami drops to third this time around



Shaun Morris just misses out on a top 10 finish

RESULTS

WTC

1	Toni Bou	(Montesa)	11
2	Adam Raga	(Gas Gas)	17
3	Takahisa Fujinami	(Montesa)	23
4	Albert Cabestany	(Sherco)	30
5	Dougie Lampkin	(Montesa)	30
6	Marc Freixa	(Scorpa)	31
7	Jeroni Fajardo	(Beta)	39
8	Graham Jarvis	(Sherco)	40
9	James Dabill	(Montesa)	64
10	Jordi Pascuet	(Beta)	67
11	Shaun Morris	(Gas Gas)	71

Series standings

1 Bou 194 points, 2 Raga 174, 3 Fujinami 144, 4 Cabestany 122, 5 Lampkin 119...7 Dabill... 14 Morris 18...21 Jarvis 8

JUNIOR

1	Michael Brown	(Beta)	6
2	Sam Haslam	(Gas Gas)	21
3	Nicolas Gontard	(Gas Gas)	33
4	Matteo Grattarola	(Sherco)	43
5	Alexz Wigg	(Gas Gas)	43
7	Lee Sampson	(Sherco)	52
10	Richard Ellwood	(Sherco)	72
12	Craig Robinson	(Gas Gas)	80
13	James Fry	(Sherco)	93
14	Sean Doyle	(Sherco)	96
15	George Morton	(Beta)	101

Series standings

1 Brown 189 points, 2 Wigg 149, 3 Gontard 127, 4 Grattarola 118, 5 Gubian 94, 6 Haslam 94, 7 Sampson 81...16 Ellwood 17...23 Robinson 4, 24 Fry 3...27 Doyle 2, 28 Morton 1

YOUTH

1	Alfredo Gomez	(Gas Gas)	19
2	Ross Danby	(Gas Gas)	21
3	Alexis Cervantes	(Sherco)	45
4	David Millan	(Sherco)	58
5	Antonio Alfonso	(Gas Gas)	60
6	Jack Challoner	(Beta)	63
12	Adam Jones	(Sherco)	92

Series standings

1 Gomez 190 points, 2 Danby 158, 3 Cervantes 144, 4 Millan 85, 5 Smage 80...16 Challoner 18...21 Jones 4

Bars bangin' and
plastics rubbin' –
C90 racing is
serious stuff...



PED HEADS!

What better way to celebrate DBR test rider Chris Hammal's return to action than a four-hour endurance race – for chicken chasers?

Words by Chris Hammal Photos by Mandy Pearse

AFTER A year off from riding due to injury I was pumped to see that I had a missed call from the northern oasis/monkey house that is the DBR offices so I called them back wondering what it might be – a flash '08 bike launch in southern Europe perhaps or maybe an all-expenses-paid trip to the US of A to check out some AMA works weapons?

So I was a little, er, disappointed to find out my services were required for a moped endurance race – but when you've got a small family and a large wife to feed what can you do?

Looking through the info I was sent it became a bit clearer what I'd let myself in for – the moped was a C90, the race was four hours long and I was part of a four-rider team. The winners would be the team with the most miles traveled.

Before I start banging on about my day on a clunk let me fill you in on the history of the C90 race series. It began back in 2005 when a small

bunch of bored people decided to ride C90s from John O'Groats to Lands End but after buying a bunch of 'em they had a change of heart. So out went one end of the country to the other and in came a four-hour off-road foolfest!

Saturday rolled around and it was an early start for me and Dave Hedgehog as it was a good 90 minutes to Birdlip motocross track. So we got there, parked up and had a stroll about – dad had a look of confusion and shock on his face that would remain for the rest of the day. I don't think he'd seen anything like it in all his days – and he's my dad so he's seen some stuff!

After a while I met up with Treve the guy that had arranged for me to be there who showed me my steed for the day – a gold-coloured C90 called GLC4, the fourth bike in the GLC90 team aka Goldie Looking C90. It looked like a standard Honda C90 apart from a strengthening

bar on the frame in front of the seat, a set of MX tyres and a gold paint job that was pretty non-factory. The three other riders who would be sharing the beast with me were Si from the Adrenalintrip website and two guys from MBUK – but I guess the thought of riding a proper bike was too much for those two as they didn't show so we had two other guys from the GLC90 crew to fill the space.

After a lot of waiting around chatting while apparently scrutineering and other things were taking place it was time for practice. I took my fine steed out for some hot laps but first I had to take it to get the bicycle speedo calibrated to record the mileage. Before I rode the moped I was told it wouldn't pull the skin off a rice pudding but I didn't expect it to be as **slow as it** was – even though I weigh less than one of Spode's meals I was still getting left behind up the straights.



**Ham-Bone goes for
another frame-stretching
landing on GLC4**



A flash of pink and Chris lost another place!



Momentum... ...is a man's best friend

Words by Bronze@Adrenalintrip.net

Throttle pinned, weight forward, keep the front end down and rail the berm WFO. Keep it pinned down the straight and sling it into the chicane hooking up the rut on the exit. It's just like riding a real bike...

Well it is until my leg gets jammed between the bars and the frame and the whole bike kicks into the air. But the thing is I've got to keep it pinned – momentum is everything when you're racing a chicken chaser!

C90 racing in the C90 Endurance Challenge series is proper racing. It must be, two days after the event I'm limping with both legs and feel like I did a four-hour H&H. There are all types racing from wobbly plodders to some very tidy national class riders. National class in other disciplines that is – every rider here is a national class C90 rider.

The bikes are all pretty similar. Aging C90 shopping scooters with various sets of 'proper' forks bodged on with MX bars to finish them off make up the field. Some look quite trick, some don't. It doesn't seem to matter much though, there's not much between them. No matter how good you are or how bad there's always someone to race.

The bikes seemed to suffer surprisingly few failures. Well, I should say the other bikes seemed to suffer surprisingly few failures. We broke ours. First the engine, then with the second engine in place the frame bent like a banana for the easy rider look. The throttle was stuck open when the frame broke for extra comedy value.

You want to try it. You really do. Buy yourself a C90. A set of forks off a CB100 drop in easy enough or if you can weld, anything will do. Get some MX tyres and you're set. One final thing, it's all for charity so get your employer to sponsor you! They can't say no...it's very silly AND it's for charity!

Thanks to RTM, Team(s) GLC and C90 Endurance Challenge for a great day's racing and apologies to whoever it was I punted into those tyres...it was all about momentum!



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NTDA

At 11.45am it was time to line up on the start – Si went first and I was set to take over on the first stop. He seemed to be struggling with the sleepy clunk but he still managed to put in a good consistent 15 minutes. As he came into the pit area it became clear that the clutch had gone – as he handed me the bike it kept on rolling so I threw myself on it like John Wayne and off I went with the clunk running as slow as ever. After trying to keep as much speed as I could around the corners for a while I got the sign from the next rider that he was ready so I rolled into the pit area but I wasn't as smooth at the change over and stalled it, handing the guy a dead moey.

After watching him for a while some of the other GLC90 crew decided to throw in a new engine so the bike was brought in for what can only be described as an F1 style pitstop. It took just 30 minutes before we were back out on the track – the only bummer was some stray oil on

me nice new Shift gear!

The other three riders all had their go putting in some good laps but we'd lost half-an-hour so when it came back round to me I wanted to up the pace. With the new motor the bike was reborn and I was having fun pushing it hard – as it turned out I was pushing it a bit too hard and landing a bit too hard n'all. The next thing I knew the throttle was jammed and the steering felt odd as I railed the corner. I rode down the next straight and pulled it over by Treve where we took a look at the bike that now resembled something out of American Chopper. So I pointed my new lowrider back to the pits where it was decided to lay it to rest for the day.

After the sad demise of GLC4 the four of us were divided up into the other GLC90 teams – I was adopted by GLC3 where I was made welcome and then sent straight out to put some miles down. After 20 minutes I pitted and handed the bike over for the final stretch only to

find out that the speedo hadn't been working so it was all for nothing. Hey ho, I wasn't worried – I'd enjoyed my day even though I was going home with a sore undercarriage from sitting too far forward in the corners.

When the flag waved for the end of the four-hour carnage it was GLC1 taking the win and a bottle of champagne with an impressive 55.8 miles.

What better way to finish a good day's racing than to hit the pub for a yard of ale competition – that's the way the C90 endurance ironmen (and women) do it. Sadly I had to hit the road as my lad Tay was racing the next day and I still had to load the wagon. I'd had a great day and met some very friendly, welcoming people who didn't care about the result – they just wanted to have fun.

So go get yourself a C90, check out www.ndc90racing.co.uk for details of forthcoming events and have a fun day out.



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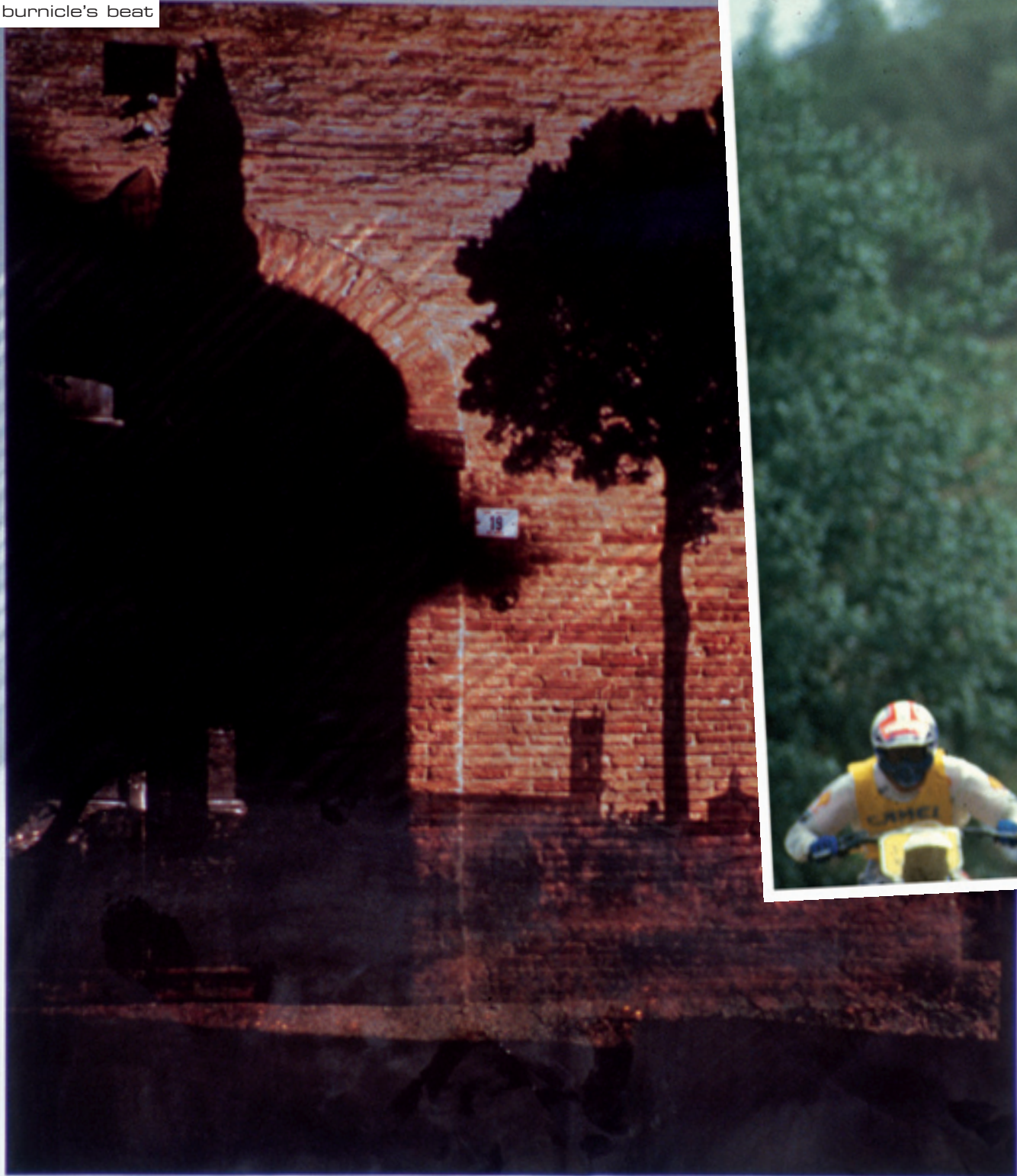
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Pasta blasta!

Back in the day when 500cc two-strokes ruled the roost, the GP calendar was a little more adventurous when it came to track selection...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle



FOR THE first 40 years of world motocross, organising clubs competed for the privilege of hosting their country's 500 and 250cc GPs and MX des Nations.

This 'competition' was most notable in the cases of France, Belgium, Holland, Scandinavia and Italy where tracks were widespread and plentiful. Imola ruled the Italian roost until 1963 but thereafter a plethora of fabulous hillside venues vied for recognition - the most famous were probably Maggiora, Gallarate, Cingoli, Arsago Seprio and Castiglione del Lago.

The cancellation of this year's South African GP led to the intriguing reintroduction of Faenza into the world championship calendar. A Roman town famous for its pottery, lying 30 miles south east of Bologna and just 10 miles up the road from Imola, Faenza earned its first Italian 500 GP in 1979 when Heikki Mikkola was victorious on a Yamaha. Another 14 seasons and a couple of 125 GPs later the big guns were back and Jacky Martens - on his ground-breaking four-stroke Husqvarna - triumphed. Then 14 further summers on we enjoyed an unexpected return...

Gallarate also made a fleeting 21st Century reappearance but other great Italian tracks have not been so lucky. Once such circuit was Ponte a Egola, a beautiful valley on the eastern seaboard of Italy between Pisa and Florence that hosted just one grand prix, on June 14th 1987. Set deep in sumptuous Tuscany, Ponte a Egola entailed flying to the fabulous Mediterranean port of Pisa and its leaning tower after an overnight drive back from the El Charro Paris supercross, a one-off open-air meeting won by US legend Bob Hannah.

I'd been gifted a discarded Team Green air ticket by

benevolent Kawasaki boss Alec Wright but was rumbled at Heathrow and left to the mercy of standby! Then, result! One last seat remained on Alitalia flight AZ261 and I travelled club class with all the trappings to the envy of Uncle Alec and Dave Nicoll!

Pisa sizzled beneath simmering skies. Confined in a Fiat 'Ritmo' mobile furnace, we called an early halt for pasta and a brief siesta (Alec loved the holiday lifestyle!) at Pontedra on the road to Florence.

One slight oversight arose. We had no passes. Alec actually relished challenges like this. He argued, persuasively, that he had spare parts for Claudio de Carlis's Kawasaki-engined Honda hybrid. The blackmail worked. Inside the circuit we met temporarily unemployed HRC team manager Steve Whitlock. His defending champion David Thorpe, nursing an arm injury, had taken an unscheduled holiday in Portugal and was missing his first 500cc GP since making his debut at Metz in France in May 1981!

Third-placed championship chaser Kees van der Ven had his right hand freshly plastered after being hit by Mervyn Anstie's cartwheeling KTM during free training. So lucky title leader Georges Jobe (Honda) suddenly found himself 36 points clear of his nearest healthy rival, Kurt

Lundqvist, who had been drafted into the Yamaha factory squad to ride the glorious aluminium-framed YZM.

Basking in the 43 degree heat recorded beneath his awning by Hakan Carlqvist's mechanic Jens Madsen, our fun was abruptly curtailed at six o'clock by a visit to the Bieffe crash helmet factory with DBR's assistant editor John Pearson.



COOL DUDE CLAUDIO DE CARLI AWAITS HIS FIRST RACE DESTINY



was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

2 DESCRIPTION SIGN

Beatrice Tridara *Wife Female

Occupation GRAPHIC DESIGNER

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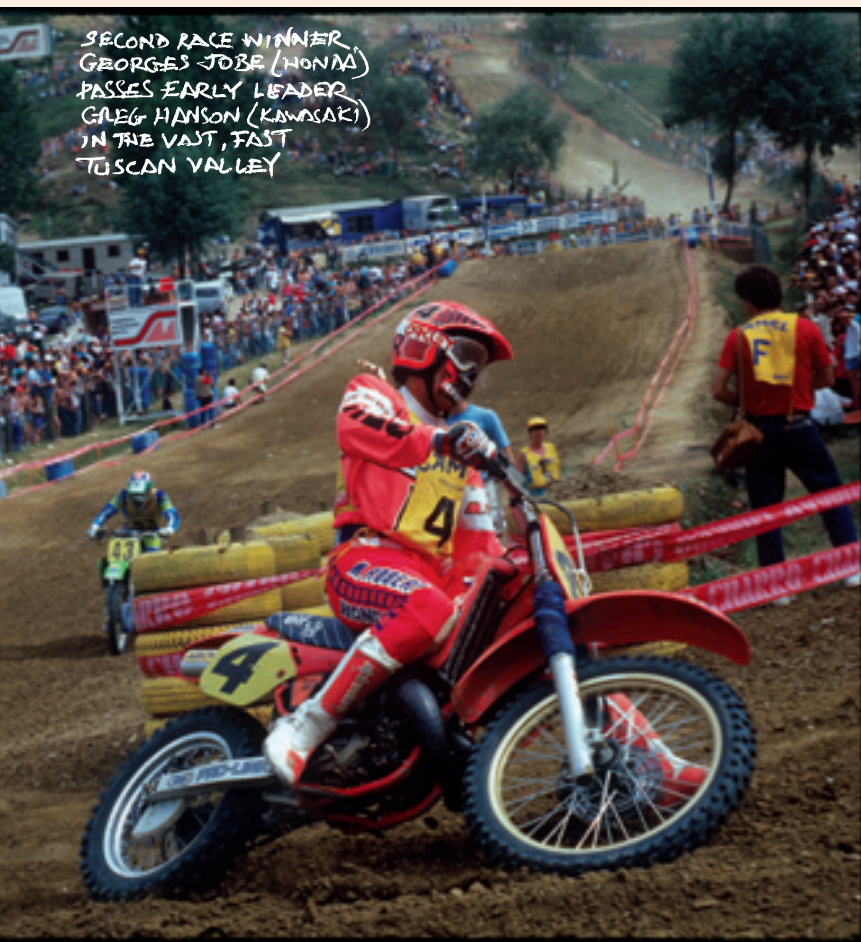
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RACE TWO BURSTS INTO
LIFE IN THE IMPOSING
AMPHITHEATRE OF PONTE
A EGOLA. PLEASE CAN WE
GO BACK, SIGNOR LUONGO?!



EXUBERANT NORTH YORKSHIRE
MAN JARED SMITH (KAWASAKI)
ENJOYED PONTE A EGOLA
AND CLAIMED A POINT
IN RACE ONE

After two hours of polite, overheated imprisonment we were released to enjoy dinner, laid out on the lawns of the Hotel Cappucini. This magnificent former monastery was in San Miniato, a breathtaking town perched high above the plains of Tuscany. There a late-night stroll ended memorably with ice cream and cappuccino on a rooftop balcony overlooking star-spangled infinity!

Timed practice on Sunday morning, round a well-watered but already baking track, exploded into a spectacular outburst of Italian frenzy from the course commentator. 'Attenzione! Attenzione! Fantastico! Magnifico! Claudio de Carleeeee!' Yes, Tony Cairoli's mentor had set the fastest lap...

De Carli - a tall, comfortably upholstered newcomer from Rome - had contested only two GPs in 1986. Accompanied everywhere by his silver-haired dad, Claudio's first full season had already realised a fourth place in France on the red Kawasaki-engined Honda.

Clouds helped cool the first race temperatures but not the ardour of Italian fans as de Carli holedshot race one through a fast right-hand sweeper and, trailing dust in his wake, led all the way to the flag - the first Italian in the 36-year history of 500cc GP racing to win a world championship race!

Behind him Jobe finished second from surprise package Jacky Martens (KTM) while similarly-mounted Italian Romano Nannini fended off a late charge by Kurt Nicoll (Kawasaki) and ex-world champs Carlqvist and Heinz Kinigadner struggled to make the top 10.

"I was so nervous for the first 20 minutes," confessed Jobe. "I love the Italian people and I like to do well for them but I rode like a junior. I could not see my lines through the dust. Then when it cleared I found they were the wrong lines so I changed them! But it was too late. Claudio was gone!"

Team Green rookie Greg Hanson holedshot race two and the 22-year-old led for three

thrilling laps until Nannini, inspired by the crowd, pounced. The eventually exhausted Italian clung on until two laps from home when duelling duo Jobe and Nicoll barged past. 'Kini' surged through the pack to fourth ahead of American newcomer Billy Liles. Merv Anstie, Hanson and Mark Banks claimed eighth, ninth and 10th places ahead of a disappointed de Carli.

Unable to repeat his first race heroics after a bad start, the urbane Roman just missed out on a podium in fourth overall behind Jobe, Nicoll and his compatriot Nannini.

Kurt Lundqvist twice fell in the dust and was horrendously side-swiped by Dirk Geukens' crashing Honda in race two but typically made no fuss. "I was taken out by another rider," said the mild-mannered Finn on a day when only three points meant the virtual end of his championship challenge aboard the works Yamaha.

For Uncle Alec and Kurt Nicoll the weekend had turned out well. "Germany was a disaster," beamed Kurt. "I thought I was out of it. Now I'm right back in it, only 22 points behind that guy who used to race. What's his name? Thorpe?"

Claudio de Carli almost matched his

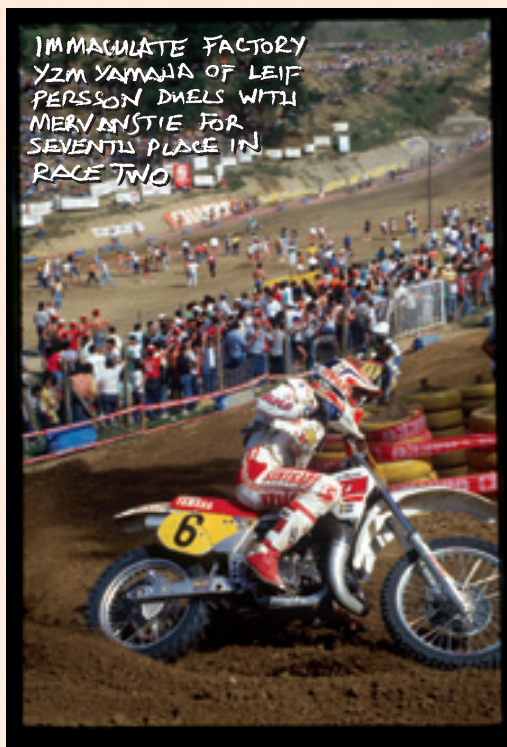
outstanding Italian performance two rounds later in a dramatic storm-lashed Belgian GP at Namur. There, in the first moto, he pushed Georges Jobe all the way, crossing the line three seconds behind the champion elect and

two ahead of Kurt Nicoll! Another disappointing second race left him fourth overall again on a bike that had turned Kawasaki green in a vain attempt to attract some factory backing from a scornful Alec Wright.

Claudio eventually placed 10th in that 1987 500 world championship, a point ahead of 'Swervin' Merv' Anstie. He reappeared, much less successfully, in 1988 and finished 20th in the series. But his real future, we now know, lay in team management with protégés Claudio Federici and Tony Cairoli.

World championship motocross never returned to Ponte a Egola's spectacular Tuscan hills but check this out. The Moto-Club Pelli Corse's 'Mondiale Motocross El Charro Camel' was promoted by a bunch of newcomers to the sport called the 'Giuseppe Luongo Organisation'. So how about it, Youthstream. Can we go back one day?

IMMACULATE FACTORY
YZM YAMAHA OF LEIF
PERSSON DUELS WITH
MERV ANSTIE FOR
SEVENTH PLACE IN
RACE TWO



AUTO FOCUS!

Ever wanted to fit an automatic clutch to your dirt weapon? Wakker shows you how...

Photos by still-mx.co.uk

WHILE THEY may not be everybody's cup of tea, automatic clutches do seem to be becoming more and more popular in the off-road world.

One of the biggest problems with them is that the average rider is overwhelmed at the thought of fitting one as when you open the box there are more pieces inside than your average

jigsaw puzzle. But the truth is that it's really not that difficult a job. Yeah it's more complicated than replacing a normal clutch in your bike but it's certainly not beyond the reach of the average bike owner.

Like all jobs it's best to work on a clean bike in a well-lit, clean and tidy workshop – there's no point in making things more difficult than

they have to be. To successfully complete this task you'll need eight and 10mm t-bars, either a 27 or 30mm socket for the centre clutch nut, an impact wrench and a T-20 torx bit and driver. Also a clutch holding tool would be helpful – I'd recommend the Motion Pro #08-0008 one which I once allowed a friend to borrow and then never got back. Grrrrr...



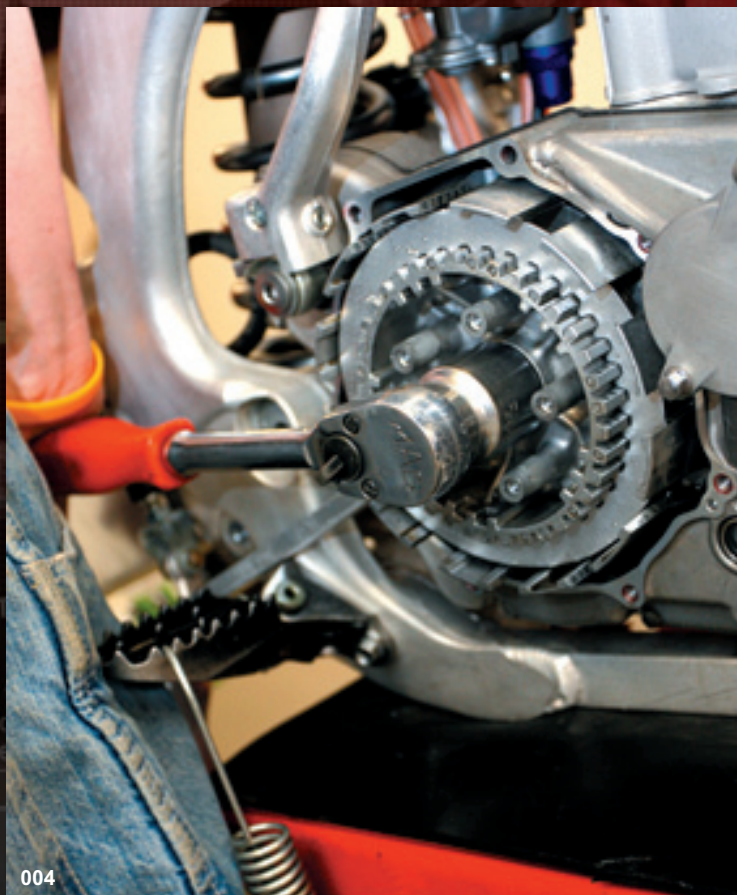
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002



003



004

001 Starting with a perfectly clean bike the first thing you're going to need to do is undo the clutch cable from the lever then drain your gearbox oil. Some bikes like the KXF we're using for this clutch fitting masterclass use the same oil in both the gearbox and motor so while the oil is out we'll replace the oil filter as well.

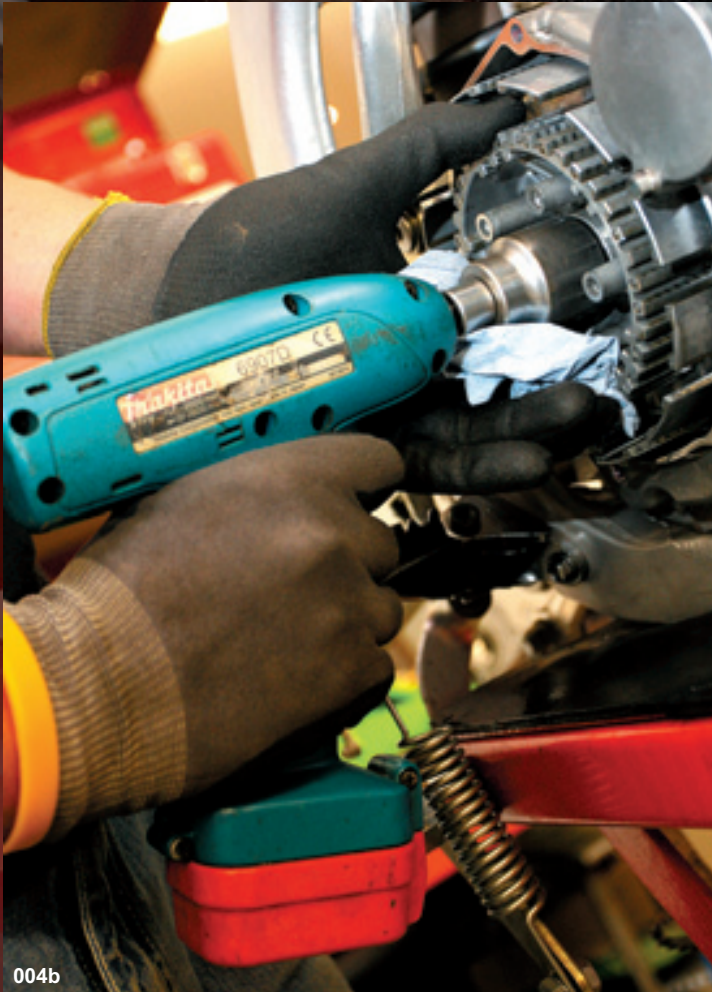
Now remove the clutch cover. As you can see the bolts that attach the KXF's clutch cover

are all a different length so it's very important to keep track of where each one goes.

002 The next step is to remove the five bolts and springs from the pressure plate. When they're out and placed somewhere safely you can remove the pressure plate and the pack of clutch plates. You're going to need the fibre faced friction discs later so clean them and put 'em somewhere safe.

003 With the pressure and drive plates removed you'll be able to see the clutch throw out in the centre of the inner clutch hub. This will slide out and needs to be cleaned and put to one side for later.

004 Using a clutch holding tool – either a Motion Pro one or a homemade version using a steel drive plate – and an adequately long wrench loosen the centre clutch nut.



004b



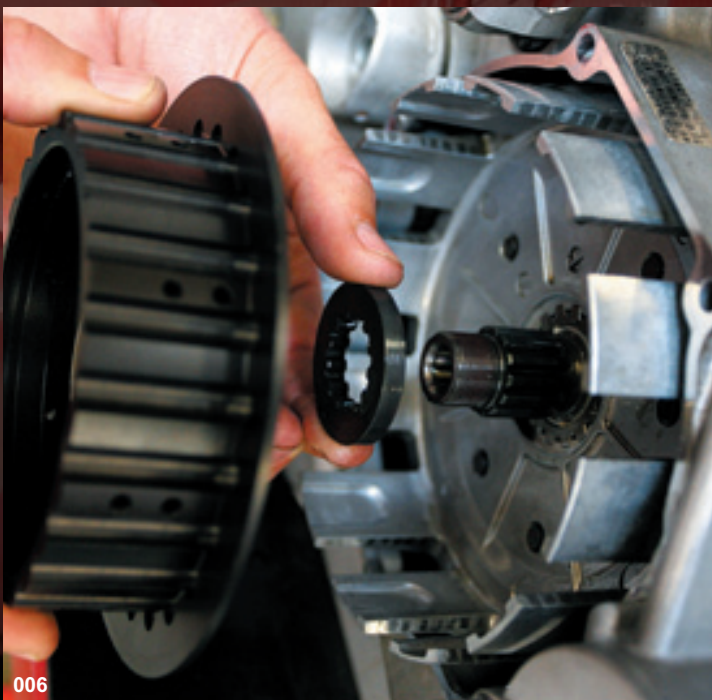
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007b



006



008

Sometimes the centre nut can be removed with an impact wrench if you have one.

005 With the nut off the inner clutch hub will slide off. Behind the hub is a thrust washer that sometimes sticks to the hub when it's removed. Locate the washer because you will need it!

006 After cleaning all surfaces it's time to fit the Rekluse inner clutch hub. The thrust washer

needs to be fitted between the clutch basket and the inner hub.

007 On some models of bike you'll need to slide the Rekluse tab washer over the main shaft but on the KXF use the stock washer and nut. Tighten the nut to the manufacturer's specified torque.

008 Now it's time to fit the clutch plates. Start

with a Rekluse steel drive plate then next to that slide in one of the stock friction plates then another Rekluse steel and so on.

You may notice you have a spare friction plate but that's okay – the Rekluse clutch requires eight friction plates and some bikes have nine!

009 Place the lower assembly into the centre hub then using gloves to protect your

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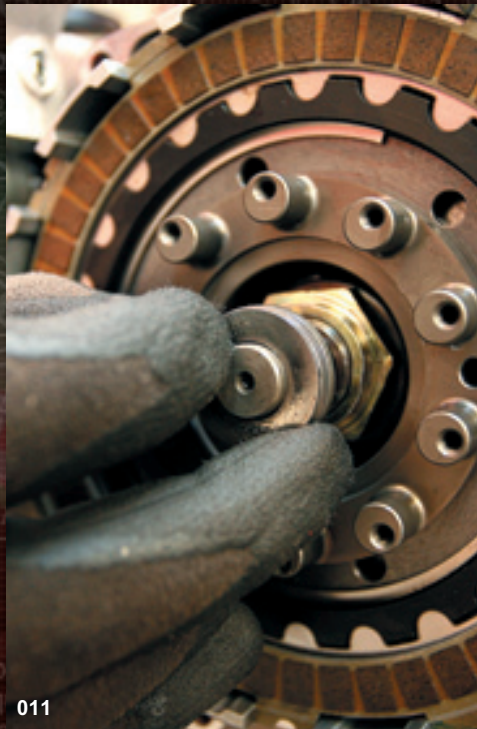
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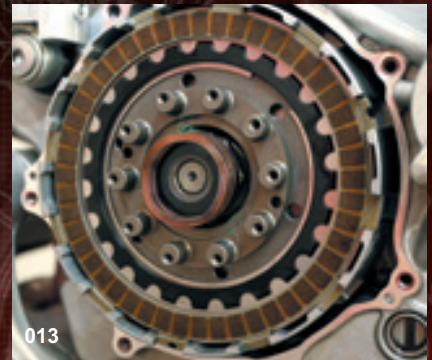
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012



011



013



014



015

pinkies from the nasty sharp edges fit the retaining ring into the groove. At this point you've got to make damn sure that the ring is properly seated because the last thing you need is it popping out later on.

010 When you're sure the ring is in position relax with a Rich Tea biscuit (much classier than the Hob Nobs other lesser mechanics favour) – you'll probably need it!

011 Install the clutch throw out ensuring the needle bearing and thrust washer is with it.

012 Now fit the Rekluse throw out spacer with the chamfered edge facing outwards before fitting the clutch lever return spring carrier on top of the throw out.

013 Unless you've bought the tricky-trick Rekluse perch adjuster you're going to need to

fit the C150 wave spring at this point. If you do have the adjuster there's no need to use the spring.

014 Still with me? Well we're nearly there... Now install the C200 spring which fits around the C150 spring in its own channel.

015 Over on the bench it's time to squirt a small amount of gearbox/motor oil into the

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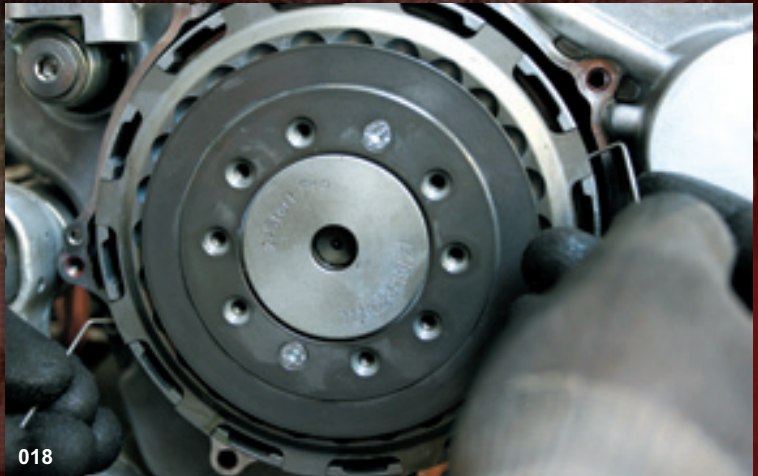
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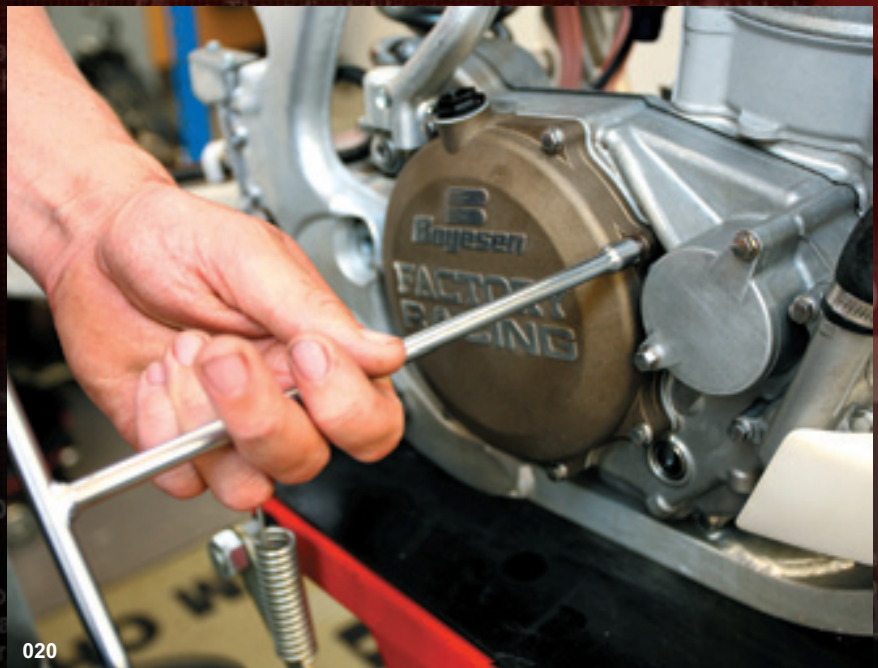
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018



019



020

ball grooves of the Rekluse pressure plate.

016 Now place the 27 steel balls into the 27 ball grooves. If you'd like a softer rate of engagement it's possible to use 24 balls with evenly spaced gaps – each ninth groove should be empty.

017 Fit the top plate on to the pressure plate making sure the 10 holes line up. Now fit the pressure plate and top plate to the centre hub using two torx bolts lightly fastened 180P across from each other to keep everything in place.

018 Attempt to slide the shorter legs of the 0.050 inch no-go wire gauges under the top-most friction plate 180P apart. Apply pressure to slide them in between the top friction plate and the drive plate next to it.

If the friction plates are in good condition the gauges shouldn't slide in smoothly and you're good to go. If the gauges do slide in smoothly the clutch pack needs adjusting. The Godfrey Walker approved quick way to do this is to replace the outermost steel drive plate for the thicker 0.065 drive plate that's included in the kit.

019 Once the gap is right install the remaining

eight torx screws using a little bit of Loctite then tighten to 14 in-lbs in a criss-cross formation start at one then tighten the one 180P across and so on until they're all tight. Don't forget to then remove the two original torx bolts, Loctite and tighten them to the correct torque setting too.

020 Refit the clutch cover using the thicker Rekluse gasket then fill your gearbox with the required amount of oil and reconnect the clutch cable to the lever. Now start your bike up and adjust the free play in the lever – ideally you want the normal amount when your



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EASY DOES IT!

Not everyone can win a world title within a few years of racing GPs and for Finn flyer Matti Seistola it's a case of softly, softly...

Words and photos by Alex Rodgkinson

FOR EVERY whirlwind like Pourcel and Searle who set the scene alight overnight there are dozens of others who take a little longer to scale the giddy heights of world motocross.

Back in 1994, for example, Brian Jorgensen beat Seb Tortelli for the Euro title. And while both 'made it' in the end, Yogi had to wait 10 years for his first GP win while Dyno was world champ within two years. And in that very same year that Brian slayed the world at Teutschenthal another Scandinavian was piling

up the points on the Euro stage to defeat the latest French sensation.

The Frenchie was Christophe Pourcel, the Scandinavian Matti Seistola and this summer the 24-year-old Finn has broken into the world top 10 with a vengeance.

"Yes, it's taken me a little longer than Pourcel but I'm world top 10 now so I didn't do so bad – and I'm still satisfied with my progress. Every now and again someone special like Pourcel comes along and it's good for the sport but

most people take longer and it's not even automatic that European champions can get to the top in GPs. Look at Tarroux. He's twice European champion and hasn't made it yet!"

And with top 10 finishes week-in, week-out the man from the land of a thousand lakes, a country where daylight is restricted to nine months of the year and snowmobiles are the most suitable form of transport in the winter months, has finally almost discarded his reputation as the King of Crash.

Matti has worked hard to shed his reputation as a crasher – but the Finn still has his moments!

"Yes, 2005 I had too many crashes! Not big ones but ones which cost me points. I try to fix that and concentrate but you are on the limit all the time and sometimes you make a mistake and crash.

"I don't know if I went too far over the limit but once you start crashing your confidence is down and you make mistakes easier, letting the front wheel wash out. There was also a little pressure that year because I was European champion and I wanted to make results, not just for me but also for the team. I wasn't so experienced and it all came together.

"It's strange. After all, I was actually champion in 2004 because I didn't crash. I was several times second and third, always top five but I never won a heat all year. I won the title because I was consistent. It was the other guys who were crashing that year. But when the level is higher, the pace is higher and you crash more easily because you are pushing the limit much more. And you know it was a very strong year. Not only Pourcel, there were Tarroux, Salvini, Renet, a lot of guys who are now in the GPs."

If 2005 had been frustrating, 2006 was a major disappointment as Matti only advanced from that crash-infested world ranking of 25th to 17th in his second full GP campaign.

"It was an up and down season. Many people



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Matti returned to Finland after the Swedish GP for the first time since leaving home in January



said the Honda wasn't the best bike last year but I put it down to me. SRS gave me a good bike but I just couldn't get consistent. It was very disappointing for me to only finish top 10 three times. At least Italy was a good race for me and I had a good end of season. That at least gave me confidence for this year and SRS recontracted me for one more year."

The Finn, whose entry into Europe had started as a purely private venture, had been invited to join the respected Italian team mid-season in 2004 with the initial two-year

deal to race alongside Patrick Caps running out last winter.

"They must have believed in me to offer me a new deal and I believe too that I have the speed. I just have to put it together and stay on two wheels. It was a good break for me to join SRS and I'm very satisfied with their support."

"They are not the biggest team but they work really hard. They are based at Pescara, a long way down the Adriatic coast, the same level as Rome. They race Hondas but they make tuning kits for every marque and quite

rightly have a very good reputation. There are only eight or nine people working at the factory and four of us at the GPs. I lived in Italy for two years but now I am based at Hasselt in Belgium during the summer. It is too hot and the tracks are too hard for training in southern Italy in the summer."

The current campaign continued the previous trend as small crashes cost Matti top 10 at Valkenswaard but he got back on to salvage 17 points and by the end of the day in Portugal had established his single digit

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Hard work has seen Seistola establish himself in the world top 10



world ranking with his only dip outside the top 10 during the races on the Iberian peninsula being an 11th in the second moto in Portugal. "I made a small mistake right at the end of the race and lost three positions."

A fortnight later SRS were on home ground at Mantova and Matti was headed for a best-ever finish in moto one until he cast it away five minutes from the end. "It is not because I am tired but I seem to lose concentration at 30 minutes. But I have recognised the problem and I am working on it so hopefully it will soon be a thing of the past. It is so frustrating to give so many points away with crashes, to be so close and give it away in the last five minutes."

Fortunately all was forgiven by the end of the afternoon as he hit back with a seventh to the flag in race two and a week later came more reward in Germany. "That was not my best race but I was consistent. I didn't make many mistakes and got two times eighth. I want to do that more often."

"France and Bulgaria didn't go so good for me because I was sick and had to take antibiotics but I stayed top 10 and came back strongly in Sweden. I am ninth at present but I think I can still finish seventh. And if I can pass Gundersen I will be best Scandinavian."

"I also hope I can push top five by the end of the year. Swanepoel's level is my goal before this year is over. He is not faster than me but is consistently fast on all types of track."

There are not so many Finns at the GPs nowadays – just four having tried their luck at some time this season – but in Bulgaria Matti



was the lone representative from the country which has given us Mikkola, Vehkonen, Ljungqvist and Vehvilainen.

"Antti Pyrhonen is out with a broken arm and Marko Kovalainen could not afford the cost to travel to Bulgaria so I was the only one there. But the young guy Eero Remes has started to come to the closer races now, hopefully he can qualify and establish himself too."

"There are so many fast guys back home but when they come out they leave their speed behind. They just come one time, don't qualify, get depressed, go home and never come again. When I go race in Finland I have trouble to beat them but when they come here they are seconds a lap down on me. I think they are afraid of the tracks they do not know."

"I hope some of the young kids can make it in a couple of years because we don't want to sink so low as Sweden. Once they were the

kings, now they are nothing. The interest in Finland among the amateur riders is increasing again because the economic situation has improved and more people can afford to ride as a hobby. Perhaps we will have MX3 and European in a couple of years and then they could move to MX1/MX2 again but more top riders will help. If we can get the sport back on TV there is more chance of help."

It's always been a hard life for Finns who want to establish themselves in GPs. "I left home on the fifth of January and the first time I went back was for four days after Sweden. One of my best friends got married that week so it was a nice break but then it was back to Belgium to get ready for Faenza. The next time I will see Finland is after the season finishes but I enjoyed those four days."

Enjoy the rest of the GPs too – and don't forget to stay on two wheels!

GAVIN GRACYK



A true privateer, Gavin Gracyk has burst onto the AMA National scene with a string of top 10 finishes this season



Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and last year launched a new bi-weekly MX magazine – Motocross Illustrated – covering both AMA and GP action. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene...

AGAINST THE ODDS!

As a full privateer holding down a top 10 position in the AMA Nats, Gavin Gracyk is making a name for himself – but it sure ain't been a smooth ride so far...

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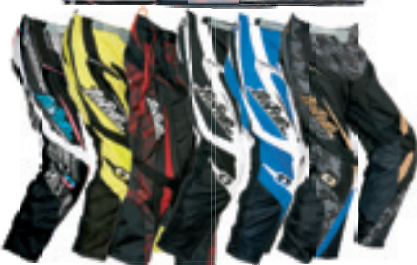


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Privatere Gavin Gracyk has been turning a lot of heads this year in the AMA Nats. He's been around for quite a while but never could quite see it through to top results in the AMA – but this year is different! Gracyk has been finishing just outside the top five on many occasions and although a full privateer – he even runs pump gas – sits within the top 10 in points.

We got an opportunity to sit down with Gracyk and go through some of his trials and tribulations to find out what got him here and where he's heading...

DBR: You've been a pro motocrosser for a while now...

GG: "Yeah, I turned pro when I was 18 years old and I'm 23 now so about five years ago. I've always kind of done my own thing. I was a Team Green rider and Lazarous Sommers of GT Thunder did my bikes and stuff and kept them in order. I did an Arenacross series one year with the Richmond Kawasaki team, too."

DBR: You raced for a few years and then you just seemed to disappear for a little while. What happened?

GG: "Well, I guess in a way I did disappear. I had some injuries. I went through some injuries with my knee and then I came back from that and went up to Canada and did some racing for the Richmond Kawasaki team up there. I got second in the Lites class behind Donnie McGourty. We were team-mates and we were mixing it up. I took the points lead halfway through the season and then had a pretty gnarly crash and DNF'd and he took over the points lead and that was pretty much history there."

"Then I went back up there riding for a Suzuki team in '05 and got second behind Jean-Sebastien Roy. Then last year I got hurt in pre-season riding with a friend and then went up there and the injuries just kept recurring. To make a long story short I only did four of the nine rounds and that was it. And here I am in the 2007 AMA Nationals on a Honda."

DBR: It seems like sometimes really solid riders get passed over a lot in our sport for either younger blood or proven veterans. Have you run into that at all in your search for a ride for next year?

GG: "No, I haven't – and if for some reason I did I would probably just let it pass me by like it didn't mean nothing because you yourself know who you are and it doesn't matter what the critics say. You know what you've got in you and what your potential and ability are. Although I did hear from a friend that

someone else was saying that I came out of semi-retirement. That's funny. I'm 23. It's like, what am I retired from? I haven't made my mark yet and I'm trying to lay the foundation now so that I can start building the mark that each one of us leave in motocross. I'm trying to build that foundation now and trying to pave the road and hopefully I'll be able to start making that mark next year."

DBR: Besides, retirement usually means you never have to work again...

GG: "Yeah, I wish that was the case! Unfortunately, unless you just have an endless bank account we all have to work to survive."

DBR: So what made you decide to stay down here for the Nationals this year instead of heading back to Canada?

GG: "Well, when everything happened with me getting hurt the team I rode for wasn't very pumped on wanting to sign me real quick and be serious about it so they kind of threw some things my way and I was like 'this is kind of a joke'. I was going through some hard times in life. I lost someone who was very, very dear and close to me – pretty much the love of my life – and when she passed away it definitely put things into perspective. It puts you in a tunnel that you feel like you're just falling through."

"And I was going through stuff with my dad who has Lou Gehrig's which is ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis). It's taken pretty much his whole body and the last thing to go is your mind. So we've been kind of dealing with that and that thing has been real messed up. His breathing's getting slowly worse but his spirit and his attitude are what make it bearable because he has a great attitude about everything. He's not afraid of death, I guess you could say, because he knows someday that we're all going to come and go and that earth is just like a 'passing through' kind of thing and that someday we'll meet up with the Lord."

"So I kind of cleared off my plate and stepped back and said 'I'm not going to rush into anything'. New Year's Eve, I started driving at about 10 o'clock at night and drove all the way through New Year's Day all the way through down to Georgia to my apartment in Thomasville which is close to MTF [the Millsaps Training Facility] and GPF [Georgia Practice Facility] and I went down there hoping I could put something together. Brock Sellards came down and stayed with me for a couple months during the supercross season and Kelly Smith was down there at GPF. I hung out with those guys and did some riding

and rode Kelly's bike here and there. When he got a stock 450, I'd jump on it."

"There was another friend down there that let me ride his Honda 450 a little bit and that's what kind of got me sold on the Hondas. I talked to Brent the owner of Cycra and I talked to Jim from Championship Powersports out of Ohio and I got myself a Honda at the end of March and one of my buddies Matt Pritchard, who has been there for me since the beginning, he drove it down to me and stayed for about a week to do some riding and that got the ball rolling with this season."

"I came back home at the beginning of April because of my dad's condition and I wanted to be with him and I put a programme together with Cycra who has supplied me with an awning and a presence and my mechanic Dave Derosier is doing a phenomenal job. He came on board with me in late spring too and it's been an uphill fight ever since."

DBR: How have these hardships affected your ability to push through to do something in this sport?

GG: "The circumstances and things that we face in life obviously shape us and I'd have to say that through everything that I've gone through it has definitely humbled me and it's made me look at it like 'hey, life's short and you get one shot'. Sometimes we think we're here for us completely and we get wrapped up in ourselves and what it is we think we need to do and, to be honest with you, I'm just trying to live my life for the Lord and everything has humbled me to the point that I'm just doing everything for Him and my parents who have done everything for me."

"Nicky was always a big part of my racing and she was always there and she loved to be a part of it so I know she would want me to keep going on and I know my dad wants me to keep fighting because he wants to see me do good. Eventually, he wants to see me holding a number one plate."

"I know we can never know how long our time is here on Earth but it's one of those things that you have to take day by day and that's what I'm doing. I'm just taking it day by day and I want to win bad. I'm just going to keep working until I either reach my goals or I'm satisfied that I tried until I can't try anymore."

DBR: How does your situation change what you're looking for in terms of a ride for next year?

GG: "I'm just taking it day by day right now. You can imagine that things are starting to come my way a little bit and people are like 'hey, I want to represent you' and people are like 'hey, this deal is opening up and this deal is opening up'. I >

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have a lot of things coming my way but financially it's definitely hard. I'm being blessed, I've got to say. Everything's coming around to where things are starting to be taken care of.

"To me it's not about money, it's just that I want to be taken care of and I want to get my worth. There are a lot of people on factory teams that I grew up racing with and they're getting paid a lot of money and these are people who, the majority of the time, were behind me in the overall results. I know what I can do on a bike and I have the want and will and desire to be my very best. It's hard because I've never really been in this position at this level so I'm just taking it day by day and learning as much as I can each week. Each week is a new test and a new learning curve. Me and my mechanic are learning so much each week that we're just soaking it in.

"Next year seems so far off but, in reality, people are starting to sign early now so that they can get their things ready. I haven't really come across someone that's really serious about me yet – someone who really sees the potential that I believe I have. I'm just going to be patient about everything and I know the finances will come. I grew up without things my whole life and my dad did without a lot to make it possible for us to go to the races on the weekends. With the help of some very dear friends who are stepping up and looking to help me

out to keep my head above water, it's making it possible...

"And although it's not the most glamorous living the purses from the AMA are helping to keep me going so I'm thankful for that."

DBR: When the day comes that you finally do sign that factory contract, do you think the experiences you're having now are going to help you to appreciate it more than maybe someone who has had a factory ride their whole professional career?

GG: "Oh yeah, for sure. I've always been raised to be very appreciative and to count my blessings and to not think about what you don't have. I want to be in a position where I can help other people the way people have helped me and blessed me. I want to be able to help other people in a few years if I'm comfortable and they're struggling like I have. I want to help people when they need help. That's what it's all about. Do unto your neighbours how you would have them do unto you.

"It's also the kind of person you are, too. If you have a giving and helping heart and you're in a position where you can help then you definitely want to do it. I want to be there. I want to help people that are less fortunate. Obviously, we know both sides of the story to this sport and when it's paved and easy it's easy to take for granted but when it's not it's much easier to appreciate."

DBR: What about supercross? That's the big question mark in the pits. How will Gavin Gracyk do on a 450 in supercross?

GG: "I answer that just like I'd answer the whole situation I'm in now. When I came into round one, no-one thought I'd be 10th in points right now. But it's because they want to see it to believe it. No-one really works on faith anymore. But I know who I am and if I told you after round seven that I'd be 10th in points a lot of people might look and laugh. But now that they see that, it's a little easier to believe. At the same time they want to put me to the test and say that I've never done supercross but growing up in Ohio I did get an opportunity to do a lot of indoor racing because it snows a lot.

"Tight, technical tracks are no problem for me. The only thing that's a problem for me is getting the right set-up, the right bike and the right place to do my work. Anybody you see who is successful at this sport, they have the tools and have a track that they can test and train at to get ready for supercross. Obviously, I've never done any supercross because I've never had that luxury. But I feel like what you see me do in motocross is what you're going to see me doing in supercross. It all boils down to getting your ducks lined up in a row so that you can go race on the weekend and be successful."



WFO!

There's everything to play for in the US Nats with series leader James Stewart nursing a knee injury and Timmy Ferry and Andrew Short closing in

Just when it seems the 2007 Toyota/AMA MX Nationals are going to become easy to predict, James Stewart crashes out of the Unadilla round during first practice on Sunday leaving the 450cc class wide open for the rest of the field to take hold of a rare chance at a win.

Mike Alessi gets the opening holeshot while Kevin Windham slides into second ahead of Andrew Short, Ivan Tedesco, Davi Millsaps, Grant Langston, Timmy Ferry and the rest of the field. Alessi tries to check out in the early-moto rainstorm but Windham has none of it. He sticks to the #800 bike while Short falls back through the field, losing three spots in the span of two laps. On lap 13 of 16 Windham finally grabs his chance to pounce on Alessi and he takes it just before the track's famed Gravity Cavity.

"Mike had some great lines in moto one and I couldn't get around him," Windham says. "He's such a great starter. I could see him get motivated when the rain came and the way he went into the first turn was really hot. He wanted the holeshot and he wanted us to eat roost and that's what I did for I guess 25 minutes. Finally he made one mistake and I was able to pounce on him immediately as soon as he spun out."

Windham goes on to take the victory over Alessi while Ferry runs third until the last lap when he goes down and falls back to fifth. Instead Langston ends up third just in front of Tedesco while Short hangs on for sixth with Millsaps seventh.

Millsaps gets his customary holeshot in the second moto – his fifth holeshot in the six motos he's raced at Unadilla the last three years. Short, Alessi, Windham, Ferry and Tedesco give chase. Alessi falls back to seventh by the second lap after being forced to pull into the mechanics' area and get new goggles and Windham seems content to hang in third behind the two Honda riders until Millsaps drops it at around the halfway point. Ferry then finds his way around Windham for second and then catches and passes Short for first only two laps later.

Windham leads Millsaps
and Alessi at Washougal



SERIES STANDINGS Motocross

1	James Stewart	290 points
2	Timmy Ferry	283
3	Andrew Short	275
4	Grant Langston	256
5	Mike Alessi	254
6	Ricky Carmichael	241
7	Kevin Windham	238
8	David Vuillemin	192
9	Davi Millsaps	186
10	Michael Byrne	148



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First corner action from Colorado with Stewart and Millsaps going bar-to-bar

Timmy Ferry takes his first Nats moto win for more than four years at Unadilla



K-Dub will never mistake a white flag for the chequers again!



"I think I rode the second moto with an 'overall' mentality," Windham admits. "I was counting points and I knew where I had to be and Ferry came by and rode really strong and I settled in. I should've tried to hang onto him a little more but hat's off to him and Andrew as well. There was some great racing today and everyone rode really strong – the crowd really got a good show."

It's Ferry's first moto victory in more than four years but it's only good enough for second overall behind Windham who collects his 28th AMA National victory.

"I've been known throughout my career as a rider with a lot of throttle control and this track requires a lot of finesse," Windham adds. "Early in the weekend my times weren't that good and I think the reason why is that people were going out and pinning it and bouncing off these powder berms and as we got closer to the race the berms pushed off of the track and we were able to finesse some of the insides."

The tour then heads to Colorado for a race in 100 degree weather and at an altitude of 6000 feet. The race is notoriously tough on riders and bikes – the riders are forced to deal with breathing in competition at 6000 feet above sea level and the bikes are not only noticeably less powerful in the higher altitude but also tend to suffer from fuel boil due to the altitude and heat.

With these added factors Stewart can't be looking forward to the race as he's not even recovered from the crash at Unadilla. Still, he grabs the lead to start the first moto followed by local boy and fan favourite Short, Millsaps, Windham, Ferry, Jason Thomas, privateer Robert Fitch and Alessi.

Millsaps moves past Short for second on the fifth lap and then sets out after Stewart. However, around the halfway point, Stewart slows noticeably and by lap 10 Millsaps is all over the Kawasaki pilot. Millsaps makes the move past for the lead on the 11th go-around and Stewart

continues to go backwards – eventually crossing the line fourth behind Millsaps, Short and Alessi. Stewart's fastest lap is a 2:25. The last two laps he runs are higher than 2:40.

Millsaps scores his first-ever AMA National moto victory while Stewart becomes a question mark for moto two. However, his dad encourages him to come to the line for the second moto.

"After the first moto I didn't think I could do it," Stewart says. "I was hurt too bad. I was in my motorhome and my dad was telling me that I have more heart than this. I'm looking at the big picture and I want to win the championship. The same thing that I did in Toronto when I had to ride with a hurt foot. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't have rode. I for sure didn't think I had it but he was able to pull it out of me today."

Millsaps gets the second moto holeshot and leads for quite a few laps until his bike begins to pop and sputter,



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likely the result of a fuel-boil problem. Stewart runs second to Millsaps and takes over the lead on the fifth lap of 15 while Millsaps continues to slide back to an eventual eighth.

While Alessi and Stewart battle over the lead, Ferry – who finished 11th in the opener after problems early on – goes by them both with two laps to go to take the moto victory followed by Stewart and Alessi with Short fourth.

Stewart, Alessi and Short tie on the day with 40 points each but Stewart gets the nod by virtue of the second-moto tie-break with Alessi second overall and Short third.

"This weekend was tough on me," admits Stewart. "With what happened last weekend and getting hurt in practice. I just came into this corner and I lost the front end and then the back end spun around so fast that I got spit off the bike backwards and I got

whiplash. I got carried off on a stretcher and I couldn't move for three days. Thursday I got a little bit better, Friday I got better and flew up here and Saturday I was a little bit nervous as far as not riding. Then in the first moto it just

snuck up on me and I couldn't lift my head up and I'm just happy to get through it."

Next up is Washougal which turns from bad to worse for Stewart. After winning the first moto in a largely processional affair, Stewart runs third for most of moto two – enough for the overall where he sits behind Windham (sixth in moto one) and Langston (fourth in moto one) – until he hits a rolling rock with only a couple of laps to go and goes down awkwardly, hurting his left knee and dropping out of the moto.

At this point it looks like Langston is going to take his first-ever AMA National 450cc victory by virtue of a 4-1 score to Ferry's 2-3. However, upon taking the white flag Windham thinks it's the chequers and slows way down only for Ferry to come blazing by.

"I was like 'what's his problem?'" Windham says. "Then I saw an AMA guy waving me on and I realized what had happened. I felt really stupid to say the least."

Windham's brain-fart means the first AMA National victory since 2001 for Ferry and that Langston finishes second overall. "I owe Kevin one, I guess," Ferry says.

Stewart still leads the points with four rounds left but he's questionable until further tests on his knee. However, Carmichael is set to return for one more AMA National at the next round in Millville, Minnesota, where he will have a chance to get his 150th AMA National victory.



His Washougal crash puts Stewart out of the moto

Short takes over second from Millsaps but Alessi is quick to pass him for the runner-up slot with six laps left to run. Alessi has a few pass attempts but he can't make anything stick on Stewart.



Ben Townley holds a slender lead in the Lites



BT and Dungey shoot the s**t

NAIL-BITER!

BT and RV take turns to lead as the Lites division becomes a two-horse race

The AMA Lites National Championship continues to be a two-man affair as Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki teammates Ben Townley and Ryan Villopoto have begun to distance themselves from the rest of the field.

Villopoto comes into Unadilla with a 20-point lead over Townley but that all goes away early in moto one when Villopoto's bike takes a rock through the radiator and begins to smoke. Instead of risking riding it out and possibly hurting himself, Villopoto pulls in while Townley scores maximum points after passing Makita Suzuki's Ryan Dungey for the lead.

Having lost 25 points to Townley in the opening moto, Villopoto starts moto two five points behind in the championship and he responds with the holeshot and a subsequent runaway victory.

"Before the first moto my dad said to go there [to the gate Dungey got the holeshot from] but I wanted to be over a little bit more," Villopoto says. "I would've had the holeshot but Dungey had the inside and then pushed me out wide. But the second moto was good. I got the holeshot and got my gap and then I could see Dungey staying the same. One lap he gained on me and then I pulled it back out to the same. I was just judging off of him and there was no reason to go over my

head because the track was crappy."

Dungey hangs on to second while Townley works his way up from outside the top 10 to grab third at the halfway point, then sets about chasing down Dungey.

On the last lap he's on Dungey's rear wheel and the two cross the line very close with Dungey hanging onto second and incorrectly thinking he has the overall victory with a 2-2 over Townley's 1-3.

With the second moto win Villopoto pulls back up to even with Townley in the points but Townley makes up 20 points on the day to Villopoto and scores his third AMA National win of the season.

In Colorado Villopoto takes the points lead back with a first moto win followed again by Townley but in moto two Townley takes advantage of a Villopoto fall to take yet another overall and tie Villopoto again in points (Villopoto's second after a second fall in the same corner he fell in the first time). "I had some problems in that turn and I just couldn't do anything about it," Villopoto says. "I fell the first time and then got up and charged and then I came around the next lap and fell again."

But Washougal, referred to by the locals as 'Area 51' in honour of local boy Villopoto and his normal race number, sees Villopoto run off and hide in the opening moto over Townley who hangs tough in second and again relinquishes the points lead between motos.

But a horrible start sees Villopoto near the tail of the top 30

off the line in moto two while Townley quickly assumes the lead. By the end of lap one Villopoto is already in the top 10. He eventually catches up to fourth behind Townley, Dungey and Yamaha's Broc Hepler, only to go down in a heap just after passing Hepler. He remounts quickly but the damage is done and he can only muster third in the moto which means that Townley leaves Washougal with a slim two-point lead over the defending AMA champ with only four rounds left to run.

"I know this series is going to go down to the wire," Townley says. "I'm counting on Villopoto being there every week."

SERIES STANDINGS Motocross Lites

1	Ben Townley	357 points
2	Ryan Villopoto	355
3	Josh Grant	286
4	Jason Lawrence	258
5	Ryan Dungey	254
6	Jake Weimer	162
7	Tommy Hahn	141
8	Andrew McFarlane	132
9	Josh Hill	128
10	Brock Tickle	127

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HEADS UP!

It's silly season Stateside and our 'almost English' insider's got the lowdown on next season's showdown

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

Bob's your uncle! Isn't that an English saying? Give me a break here – I'm trying to relate to you guys and gals so you think I'm cool. I'm Canadian and we were once owned by you guys so in a way I'm English too! We had to sing God Save The Queen every day when I was in grades two to five – does that make me cool?

Anyways, by the time you read this a lot of what I'm going to speculate about and tell you will already be answered but just bear with me here – I'm going to take you through what we in 'Ameriker' (Chad Reed's pronunciation) call silly season.

It's the time of the year where riders are switching team, teams are dumping riders and mechanics and truck drivers are snooping around trying to find a better deal. It used to be that the rumours and negotiating were done around halfway through the outdoors but now, like the new gear season, it starts right after supercross. Heck, two years ago Ivan Tedesco had already signed with Suzuki before the outdoors even started!

This year there are some shake-ups that are going to be happening. With Ricky Carmichael retiring and James Stewart's habit of self-implosion, teams sense that they can win more than ever. The search for the next guy has everyone opening their wallets like Katie and Peter at a Louis Vuitton store (see, I'm just like you guys, my wife and I have fallen in love with your favourite couple!)

Team Honda let RC go a few years ago and, off the record, Honda execs will tell you that they were paying millions in win bonuses and it was breaking their budgets so they decided to let RC go knowing full well it could come back to bite them. Well, since then it has been lean times for Honda with a few wins by Kevin Windham and not much else.

Well in 2008 Honda is coming back with both guns blazing! They signed GP hero Ben Townley and Ivan Tedesco to ride for them and combine them with Andrew Short and the still emerging Davi Millsaps and that's as close as you're going to get to a super team.

I think this is a great move! Townley is going to ride the 250F indoors but then join the others on the 450s for outdoors. Don't forget Kevin Windham either, he's probably going to sign a SX-only deal for 2008. I love this team and think with Townley and Short they are set for a long time. Now if only we could introduce Aldon Baker to Davi we might have something!

I can't figure out Tedesco leaving Suzuki though – he was clearly the number two guy at Suzuki but it figured that he would get all the attention with RC gone in '08. He's familiar with the team and bike, leaving just doesn't make sense to me. Plus he's only in the beginning of his career so no need to jump teams so much early on. He's ridden all four Japanese brands in only five years! I have heard rumblings that he's not happy with the bike so maybe that's it.

Kawasaki is set for 2008 with James Stewart and Timmy Ferry. James' contract runs out at the end of 2008

and it's my belief that he will be looking for a SX-only deal at that time. Ferry signed for '08 and '09 so he's set. The powerful Pro Circuit team is all good for next year with Ryan Villopoto, Christophe Pourcel, amateur star Austin Stroupe and Brett Metcalfe. If one of these gets hurt, Mitch Payton will pull a fan out of the stands each week and watch them get top five with this bike and team.

Suzuki is looking set as well. With RC and Tedesco gone they have two new guys for the 450 team. David Vuillemin and Mike Alessi will team up in 2008 and it's kind of ironic as DV was going to retire two years ago and become Mike's coach/trainer but whenever he would tell Mike anything, Mike's dad Tony would tell him that it was wrong! Soon after that DV realized his coaching career wasn't going so well and he got on the gas. I wonder how information will be exchanged between these two now? Suzuki has a brand new 450 with fuel injection and DV told me that one of things that Suzuki told him was that they really wanted a guy who lived in Southern California and

them containing Nick Wey on a 450 and Martin Davalos on a 250. The other one will be the primary Lites team with Justin Brayton, Ryan Sipes, Matt Goerke and one more guy. Should be interesting to see Nick Wey, one of the better 450 guys, on that bike and maybe finally we'll get a verdict on whether it's the riders or the bikes.

Yamaha is staying with Grant Langston, Josh Hill and hopefully Broc Hepler will stay injury free and show us what he can do.

A new team is Gibbs Racing, a North Carolina outfit that has its roots in NASCAR. You guys may not know this series but it's somehow amazingly popular over here. It consists of driving an eight cylinder, carbureted tank around an oval track. You basically hold it to the floor and draft the dude in front of you. Does it sound like I'm a fan? Anyways, they have a bazillion dollar budget and are making bold claims of what they can do as a privateer team. They might have a point here as a typical NASCAR team employs lots of engineers and data guys. They are using



Enjoy it while it lasts Mitch – BT's heading for Big Red in '08

was a good test rider and, trust me, from working at Factory Yamaha I know DV knows how to test.

Alessi just needs to improve his supercross skills but the whole family felt that their KTM was holding them back so this is going to be the most interesting guy to watch in my opinion next year. As far as the Lites team, the big yellow machine will keep star-in-the-making Ryan Dungey 'and dragons' (see what I did there?) and add in amateur star Nicco Izzie.

Speaking of KTM, they are circling the wagons a bit and sort of dropping out of SX/MX. They have lost their primary sponsor Red Bull (word on the street is that Honda will soon have wings) and they are letting MDK Motorsports run the 250/450 teams. Two trucks, one of

Yamahases with full works suspension. Sounds good, right? Then they go out and hire Josh Hansen to ride – are you ready for this – a full 450 SX and MX season. He hasn't done that many races in three years – how's he going to string one full 450 year together? Truly baffling decision but Josh does have a lot of talent and maybe they are seeing something that 97 per cent of the industry doesn't see.

Michael Byrne has been linked to MDK, Gibbs, Rockstar Suzuki and pretty much every other team out there so, as of now, I don't know what he's going to do.

So there you have it – that's what I know and, like I said, by the time you read this most everything will be settled...





RATT TRAP?

World MX2 vice-champion in 2004, if things had gone to plan Tyla Rattray would've been crowned king in '05 and then been free to join his buddy Ben Townley in the States the following year – but they didn't...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

Despite an injury-hit couple of seasons Tyla Rattray's still got a world title – and then America – on his mind



TYLA RATTRAY is still only 21 but 2008 will be his eighth year in the MX2 GPs and there can only be one goal – and that's a world title!

"It was tough and I only made the final choice one week before KTM announced it at Faenza," says the South African of his decision to stay put for another year. "I had a few deals for both classes – in Europe and America – but I enjoy racing the MX2 class.

"I don't think my time's up in MX2 and it's a fun class, really intense. I have a job to finish there before I move on and I still feel I can win the world title so I will stay one more year. If I didn't believe that, then I would have gone MX1.

"I definitely believe I can run with Cairoli. I don't think he's any better than me. But at the moment he's got the right package and he's running on a high. He just can't do anything wrong but for sure my time will come when I start winning again and I will be pushing for that for the rest of the season."

The crown prince and vice-champion to buddy Ben Townley in 2004, Tyla is still waiting to be king. So why is it taking so long?



RATTRAY RECKONS...

Searle Power

"Tommy's still young. He's just like I was when I was 18. It's fun coming on to a team when you're so young and he's been a cool team-mate. And it's nice to have an English-speaking team-mate, especially when we're travelling to Japan or even in Europe when we take planes together.

"Tommy has picked it up pretty good and next year he's going to be even a step better than now. Next year he'll definitely be one of the guys racing for the title. And me too!"

"Probably '05 should have been my year. I started off winning everything and I felt good too but I had bad luck to get hurt, doing my ACL at Namur. That lost me that year even though I came back and won the last three races. And '06 went pretty much the same.

"Again I started off the year winning but then a string of little injuries and the lead was gone. I twisted my ankle in Italy and it took me forever to get back. I damaged the three main ligaments in my ankle and it still wasn't 100 per cent three GPs later. I just couldn't push for the wins. The only way it was going to heal was if I gave it time to rest but you don't have time to do that in the middle of a season."

Having started two seasons as the hare who got gobbled up by the hounds, Tyla tried a different approach this year but fate still intervened.

"My preparation coming into the season has always been good and I've been ready for two 40-minute motos before the opening GPs. But I felt I needed to take it a bit easier coming into the season. I've been ready too quickly in the past.

"Last year Christophe was consistent the whole summer and that was my aim for this year and, except for a mechanical problem in Portugal and the start crash in Sweden, I've been consistent all year. But Cairoli has picked the pace up a lot this year and it looks like you're going to need race wins to win the championship this year.

"I feel like I have the pace of Tony and Chris and I definitely have the fitness to run with them but I need to sort out my first few laps. I'm just not getting the starts and am taking too long to settle down and I had a problem with my corner speed at the start of the year.

"But I've been working on my weaknesses. I've been riding short sprints to get my heart rate up quicker, I've been practising special sections like corners and now it's been going better. I just want to get out there now and race with Cairoli and Pourcel."

And, deep down, Tyla believes another factor cost him his best shot this year. "That crash at Valkenswaard wrecked everything. Okay, I was racing next day but if I hadn't crashed in quali I might have taken both holeshots and won both motos. And that could have changed head games and everything."

Having spent his entire career in Europe on KTM, Tyla's name is almost synonymous with the Austrian marque. That's not saying he hasn't had the chance to change machines – he has – but so far no-one's managed to tempt him away from orange.

"KTM went a long way to keep me and in the end they came up with the best deal. I'm happy to stay there. The guys work hard and the KTM engine is very strong but motocross is very much a head game. If you have it in your head when you go to the start that you're definitely going to win that race, then you've got a big chance of winning. If you put Stewart or Carmichael on any bike they'd still win."

So where else could Tyla have gone?

"There were a lot of rumours that I was going to Suzuki, to Yamaha, to GPKR. Some of them were true, some not. I had quite a few open possibilities for America too. They were good offers – Yamaha, KTM, it could have gone any way. KTM were talking to me about MX1 as well but I decided in the end my heart was still in MX2."

So how d'ya reckon you'd get on with the big boys, Styla? "When I do go MX1 it will be a new challenge and motivation. I feel I could step up to MX1 and run the pace of Josh and those guys straight away. I already raced a 450 last month in Germany. I got two holeshots, put in some good laps and rode away from them to win both races pretty easy so I know I don't need to be scared of the class."

"Riding the 450 is a bit difficult at first – you have to respect the bike, it's a lot of power and you can't ride it like a 250 or you're going to get thrown off and probably get injured. They call me Bull but that comes from my stance, my technique on the bike, not because I'm wild. I know you can't hang it out on a 450 like on a 250."

Rattray reckons his Leatt brace saved his season – at the very least – in Valkenswaard



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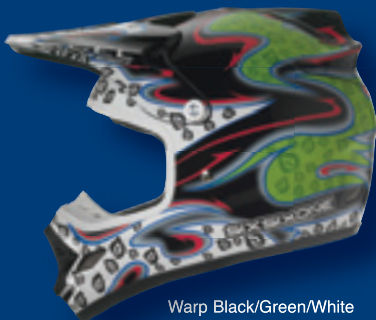
Head-to-head with fellow SA export Gareth Swanepoel

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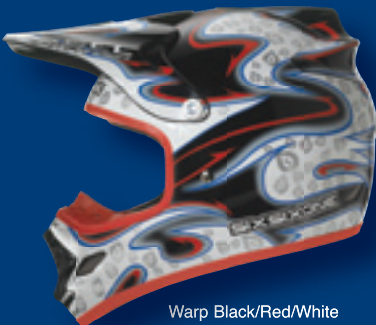
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Warp Black/Green/White



Icon Orange/Red/Gold



Warp Black/Red/White



Icon White/White/Chrome



Warp White/Blue



Icon Mustard/Black/White



Warp Grey/White/Red



"It's difficult to beat Cairoli at the moment on MX2 but on MX1 I think that would be a different story. He's not the biggest guy. I know that's not everything, after all Christophe is also not so big and he won a heat in the Belgian championship already and if you're a good rider you're gonna win anywhere. When Cairoli goes MX1 I'd expect him to win races...but not as many as me!"

And what about US? Is that still a possibility? "I don't feel I've missed the boat. It was my plan of course to win a world championship back in 2005 and then go. I think it's important to have a title under your belt so you can go there as a champion. That gives you recognition and helps with negotiations because you don't want to go there without being in the right team."

"But I won't rush my decision. To make an impact there you have to have the best team and the best people around you. Look at Ben, he's got Pro Circuit around him and he has made it."

And any transatlantic switch will be for the whole works. "If I'd taken up any of the offers I had for America in '08 I would have gone straight into supercross. That's the most important over there and you can get paid the same just to ride supercross as you would for the whole year. They still care about outdoors but it seems there are less and less top riders interested. But I would like to do both. I enjoy racing, I want to race every week, so the long season would not worry me. If you train right I don't think there's a problem."

"And if they wanted me this year, then for sure they will still be interested in '09 if I put some results together. I'm expecting to be getting mails at the end of 2008 again about going to America. I want to go there and when I see how well Ben is doing and how far he and Villopoto are ahead of the rest I think I can definitely be a top runner in America."

Tyla's new deal with KTM is for just 12 months. "I didn't want a two-year contract. I wanted to keep my options open, whether it be to go to the States or move up to MX1, I could even stay MX2 again. And it's also good to have that extra impetus to earn a deal for 2009. I need to be doing something next year to earn a deal – that just makes me more motivated."

"And I don't want to look any further than '08 yet. So many things can happen and I just want to concentrate on winning that title. I don't want any distractions!"

**RATT
TRAP?**



RATTRAY RECKONS...

Neck braces

"I was pretty happy that I was using the Leatt neck brace already in Valkenswaard. I landed straight on my head. It was a pretty scary crash but wearing the brace put me back on the bike next day – without it I could have been in a wheelchair for the rest of my life."

"Faenza was the first time I used it with the strap so it doesn't move around. Before it was bouncing about a bit but that's never really bothered me."



In action in
South Africa
last season

RATTRAY RECKONS...

South Africa

"I was a little disappointed that there wasn't a GP in SA this year – particularly as it was initially going to be in my hometown of Durban – but they've got it for five years now and the new organisation are switched on and will do it properly. They've seen what needs to be corrected and I know they are working hard to be the best GP again."

"And I think the race will be in Durban. The government are going to give them land and permission to run for five years."



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Drew who?

Competition mind coach

Neil Drew is a former MX and enduro racer and a qualified sports mind coach. At present he is coaching two national champions and several GP competitors and has helped many amateur and professional athletes from all over the world. He can be contacted via DBR or through his website at www.competitionmind.co.uk



THIS IS the fourth in our series of articles devoted to the little known area of sports performance mind coaching. In this article we will help you to understand how our mind and emotions can play tricks on us and we can create our own sabotage.

My trusted little dictionary describes the word sabotage as 'internal damage carried out secretly'. Where does sabotage come into competition? We're not talking here about your rival letting your tyres down or putting water in your petrol. We are talking about what we do to ourselves and what we allow others to do that affects our minds and attitudes.

There are so many forms of internal sabotage that it is impossible to cover and list them each individually. So we will give you an overview of what this subject matter is all about with a few examples. Usually internal sabotage is brought about when we have that feeling inside us that gnaws away and we can't stop feeling bad about something that is interfering with our concentration. It can also be termed as guilt and will sometimes take the form of worrying or an internal conflict where part of us wants to do one thing while the other part of us is in a kind of turmoil and disagreement with our actions. It can also take the form of making a negative decision about an outcome before



SELF SABOTAGE?

We've all heard the expression 'he's his own worst enemy' but with the right mental approach you can train your brain to not think about failure...

Words by Neil Drew

we even start to compete.

This fits in neatly with our previous article but it is only one type of sabotage. The more typical type is when a girlfriend or partner or even a parent figure doesn't agree with our chosen sport – they either don't like the sport or the fact that we take time for ourselves doing something that they choose to not be involved with. The more common reason for them not liking it is because they are afraid of us getting hurt but here is the paradox – when someone says something like 'be careful' or 'take care' they are unwittingly telling us to think about what could go wrong. And if you have been reading our previous articles you will be well aware that when someone sews a seed of doubt then because we are focusing on it at an unconscious level that's often exactly what does happen.

As a consequence we may feel guilty, like we are doing something wrong. This in turn can make some people feel angry and frustrated and competing with a whole bunch of anger or frustration really can cause a problem or two out on the track.

Other forms of internal sabotage can take the form of age discrimination. We've all heard people saying things along the lines of '28 is the peak in motocross, from there it's all

downhill' or 'you're getting older and all the young ones are coming through'. What's bizarre about this is that we actually listen and take it on board, then we have a set of boundaries and beliefs set in place that we work towards or in fear of. This then gets used as an excuse for a poor performance which then sets us up for our next failure. In short we again choose to allow ourselves to sabotage our own performance and belief in our abilities. The flip side of this is when young riders hear statements along the lines of 'he's so experienced' and they suffer internal sabotage as well but from a different direction.

The type of venue or class of event can sometimes cause anxiety and self sabotage and often the people around us don't help by heightening our awareness of the fact that an event could have 'caused difficulties in the past' or that the 'best riders and stiffest competition will be met at these places'. The negative associations that statements like these can cause can leave us thinking how we might fail – sometimes riders even think about how they are going to look or feel if they have a bad result. Again the self internal sabotage can take hold and decide the outcome before we have even got to the startline.

The 'other competitor' syndrome is also a

common form of sabotage. This is where we see that someone we've been comparing ourselves to is doing well or maybe an innocent third party tells us that Joe Bloggs is going to be hard to beat.

By now you should be getting the picture. We can be influenced by what others say or things that we see or even by previous experiences that we've had. In fact there are so many ways that we can sabotage ourselves and our actions that the choice is endless. And the outcome is in real terms decided by what we choose to think about any given situation – 99 per cent of competitors will immediately consider the worst case, take the negative choice and therefore sabotage their own efforts. And then they will use their decision as an excuse later on after they have acted out the result that they decided on before a wheel was even turned.

Always remember that whatever the competition, whatever your level of ability, whatever equipment you ride, whatever anyone says to you – you are in charge of what you think about and how you feel. You do have a choice and the easiest way to begin the process of understanding the choices available is to step back and look at the big picture first.

Until next time, enjoy your sport.



NEW LOOK!

It's meant to be summer so the time is right to give the DBR dirt scooter a mid-season overhaul...

Words and photos by Sully





IT'S TIME to show the KXF a little love, treat it to some tenderness and then bend the beast over and slap it into shape. It's no secret that the KXF has been less than kind to my hands so far but I'm not about to hold any grudges and my four-popper's about to be primed, prepped and perpetually preened like a princess – not an Austin Princess though, that'd be ridiculous!

With most of my riding being done on motocross tracks that's what the bike is to be set up for although not so moto that it's totally unsuitable for the odd hare scramble or enduro event.

With most 450s being a tad lively when it comes to delivering their power I reckon a slightly softer – dare I say enduroised – delivery would suit most motocross riders better as a rideable bike is usually much faster around a track than one with bulk horsepower. With that in mind I've found a suitably smoothing and very quiet pipe that bolts straight onto the KXF.

There are a plethora of aftermarket exhaust pipes available for four-poppers – most of which claim they offer more power than stock. A bit more power is fine but why anyone but

top-British championship and GP riders would want harder hitting power from a 450 baffles me – but then again after a string of concussions that ain't exactly hard.

With rideability being of top importance I contacted Craig Elwell at DEP Pipes and pleaded with him to produce me something suitably smooth and quintessentially quiet – and boy did he come up with the goods!

Standard DEP S7 systems are what Craig would call 'the b*****s' and the one he provided us with is the, erm, uber-b*****cks! Delivering buttery smooth power in an ultra-quiet stylee, this pipe is just what the Dawgwer ordered – nice one Craig!

The SR-75 tuned suspension has also been softened slightly and is now plusher than Lucy Pinder's perky plump pillows – allegedly. A simple strip down and rework is all it took and now the bike handles and turns infinitely better than before as it uses much more of – and generally sits slightly lower in – its stroke. Good work Godfrey!

As well as tweaking the key components plenty of other parts have been swapped and changed including the wheels. Without 'em on

the bus it ain't going anywhere and while there's nowt wrong with the stock hubs, spokes and rims a spare set of wheels is always handy.

There are a bunch of great aftermarket wheel sets out there on the market – including Talon, Haan, Multitek and Excel – and to be fair they're all top notch products whose quality and strength have been more than proven.

After using both Multitek and Talon hubs in the past I decided to try a pair of Haans for the first time in '07. Engineered in Holland from the finest grade aluminium available, the Haan hubs are then laced to Excel rims using zinc-coated, high-strength steel spokes which makes the finished product super strong.

Bolted to the Haan hubs are Apico Artrax stainless steel brake discs that are the same circumference as the stockers but increase braking efficiency thanks to the superior grade of material they're machined from. On the opposite side of the rear hub is a Renthal TwinRing sprocket that's driven by a Renthal R3 o-ring chain – hopefully that already well tried and tested combo will last me long time.

One thing that doesn't last so long on the KXF is tyres as 450 four-strokes kill them in

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Dirty Weekend!

Hanging with the Corsham massive!

It's not unusual for me to get a broken night of sleep before a race. It's not because I'm nervous about the race itself but after a hard and sometimes stressful week at work I'm way more worried about sleeping so well that I won't wake up in time to make it to the race before signing on ends. But for my last race on the KXF before its magical makeover I had the strangest excuse ever for not getting in my full quota of Zs...

Driving from Morecambe to Marshfield normally takes around three to three-and-a-half hours on a clear run and that's what you'd expect late on a normal Friday night. But the night before the Corsham SSC's Masters of Motocross two-dayer was far from normal. Freaky Friday would pretty much sum it up as a whole month's rain fell from the skies over a space of a few hours wreaking havoc and leaving A-roads and even the M5 unpassable.

After spending hours trying to find a way through the carnage – there were flooded roads and stranded cars pretty much everywhere – it was pretty late when I found somewhere to sleep feeling safe in the knowledge that it didn't matter how Z-deprived I was as no track in the country could run a race after taking so much rain, right? Wrong!

Not only was the Marshfield circuit rideable, after a block of two-lap practice sessions it was sweeter than ever as the super-tacky dirt rutted up to leave a race ready surface with plenty of passing opportunities. Sleep – pah, who needs it?

With a perfectly prepped track and a bunch of hard riding class mates to go up against I was in heaven for the first 10 minutes of each moto before blowing out of my arse for the remainder.

All in all I had a great weekend which helped remind me why I love racing so much. I've gotta say thanks to Adrian Smith and the Corsham SSC committee and everyone who banged bars with me at some point or other throughout the weekend – you all rock! Cheers guys!

78

record time so quality of rubber and an aggressive tread pattern are key when it comes to choosing knobbles for the mag machine. Maxxis tyres are generally made from a quite malleable – or flexy if you prefer – material and aren't in the habit of shredding knobs which makes them a good choice for anyone whose bike lays down power like Tito Ortiz lays out opponents.

Lately I've been running Maxxis HT 7300 front and 7301 rear tyres. These offer great grip on medium to hard ground and seem to be holding up pretty well. It's also worth remembering how awesomely the Maxxis SM pairing work in sand and mud – that's where the SM name comes from. Admittedly the SMs are next to useless on anything firmer than jelly and custard but in slop they're the dog's!

As the official oil of both Switzerland and the Kawasaki Racing Team I figure Motorex

oils are more than good enough to be used exclusively as the lubricant of choice on the DBR KXF. With a comprehensive range of effective and easy to use products available (engine oil, chain lube, filter fluid, silicon spray, bike wash – the frickin' lot) the choice to run Motorex is an easy one.

Equally outstanding in their field are Twin Air filters – there's simply no better air filter available for the motocross market than those bearing the Twin Air logo. The dual-stage filters work brilliantly with the coarse outer foam catching the biggest bits of dirt and debris before the finer foam of the inner filter finally traps the smallest of particles ensuring that only the cleanest air gets through.

Badly prepped or torn air filters are the #1 cause of premature inlet-valve failure on four-stroke motocross bikes so it's well worth making sure your motor is well defended. The only way to do this is to prepare your filter like your life depends on it...

In the cockpit Renthal Windham-bend Twinwalls – 966 bend – and dual compound

Kevlar grips are the go here. I've used Windham bend bars ever since Wakker suggested it back in '04 and for someone of my height they're pretty much perfect – good choice Godfrey!

Kevlar dual compound grips have only been around for a year or so but they rapidly became a favourite of mine after my first pair lasted an entire season. The best thing about the Kevlar grips is they get softer and tackier each and every time they're used – fantastic!

Clutch and front brake control is taken care of by fall-proof folding Sunline ARC items that appear to be unbreakable by man or beast! As well as apparently lasting forever they look pretty cool too although I really wish there were some way of covering the spring assembly on the front brake as it looks kinda hoopty with it being open to the elements.

The bars and everything on them are bolted to trick triple clamps which are the coolest thing on earth next to liquid nitrogen (or The Fonz). While most aftermarket companies' anodised billet aluminium clamps are sweet, RG3 billet aluminium clamps are sweeter and that's mostly because of their four-post bar mount system which means no matter how hard you crash your clamps can't twist!





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The final look of the bike is taken care of with Polisport plastics that bolt straight on and look great too. With a full-set – that's rad scoops, side panels, front and rear fenders – available for less than 60 golden nuggets they're not gonna break the bank either.

Look closely at the bike and you'll see that both fenders are a wee bit different than the stockers. The front is a vented Polisport item while the rear fender is actually taken from a KX250 two-stroke. The main reason why that's on there is because I hate the shape of the OEM fender – it makes the KXF's rear look like the back end of a bus – and the two-smoker's looks way sleeker.

N-Style Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki team items grace the Polisport plastics with matching custom backgrounds knocked up by N-Style in America helping keep lap scorers happy wherever I race – they look super sweet too.

Something else that looks super trick is the Boyesen Factory Racing clutch cover behind

63 783111

Cheers guys...

Thanking the people who helped this happen

Without the help of the following companies we'd never have been able to complete this project. Thanks a lot guys – you're all owed a frenzied Sutt-Dawg leg humping...

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which is fitted a Rekluse Z-Start Pro automatic clutch. The Z-Start Pro works using centrifugal force to push steel balls up rampways to automatically and smoothly engage the clutch. At idle the balls are at the bottom of the ramps and the pressure plate is disengaged but as the RPMs increase the balls move out up the ramps, push on the Rekluse top plate and force the pressure plate into the clutch pack engaging the clutch.

If engine RPMs are reduced then the balls drop back down the ramps and the clutch disengages. Generally speaking the take-off should be smoother and the disengagement quick eliminating any pop stalls.

One of the best bits for me at least is that the clutch lever can still be used to override the Z-Start Pro at any RPM so it appears there are only positives to fitting a Rekluse clutch – I guess we'll find out in the long haul...

So with the bike fully prepped it's time to make the most of what's left of the summer sun and go do some riding...

WASH OUT!

Rain stops play prematurely in Whitby but not before the MX2 series lead changes hands...

Words and photo by Suttly

RED BULL KTM's Tommy Searle comes to round six of the Maxxis British motocross champs at Whitby with a 37-point lead in the MX2 championship. Who would have ever thought it possible he'd leave in third place, two points behind brand-new series leader Mike Brown?

But that's exactly what happens as CAS Honda's 35-year-old ex-AMA and British 125cc champ storms to 3-2 finishes to take the championship lead – by just a single point – ahead of Molson Kawasaki's Gareth Swanepoel with just two rounds remaining.

Brownie and Swanny spend most of the day in each other's pockets with just less than half-a-second separating them at the end of moto one and around thrice as much in the second. With Gareth being in front both times he takes the overall ahead of Bike It/Dixon Yamaha's Carl Nunn who picks up third in moto one before riding his socks off to move from 13th to first second time out as the rainy weather closes in.

And Tommy? Well, if trying to bury himself headfirst in the whoops in moto one isn't bad enough things goes totally tits second time out. After grabbing the lead from Brownie on lap two catastrophic rear brake damage – Tommy's disc totally breaks away from the hub ripping off the caliper in the process – causes the pilot of the #101 KTM to pull the plug and take the consequences of a DNF right in the kisser.

There's also an early finish for the MX1 boys but only after they've risked life and limb by battling it out for 14 minutes in treacherous slop and torrential rain during race two. And because the race never reaches half-distance (one minute longer is it all it needed – did Dave Williams the clerk of the course make a calamitous miscalculation maybe? I think so...) the results don't stand.

With that in mind you don't actually need to know that Pioneer Yamaha's Brad Anderson crashes out in fine style while leading, Whitby boys James Noble and Jordan Rose run an easy 1-2 while the Smyth brothers have career best third and fourth place finishes in the bag before the race is prematurely, prematurely ended. But none of that ever actually happened, right?

Instead the crowd have to be content with moto one's snoozer – there's literally more spectator interest in what's cooking in the burger van than out on the track – to decide the overall outcome...

Kawasaki Racing Team's Billy MacKenzie uses his perfectly prepared concrete launch pad to get the holeshot and from there he never looks back – not even when defending champ Ken De Dycker piles on oodles of pressure mid-moto. Noble runs third throughout ahead of Rocky's Dad – that's Anderson – and PAR Honda's Gordon Crockard who recovers well after an early fall.

Series Standings

MX1

1	Billy MacKenzie (KRT Kawasaki)	290 points
2	Ken de Dycker (CAS Honda)	274
3	James Noble (Multitek Honda)	253
4	Gordon Crockard (PAR Honda)	251
5	Brad Anderson (Pioneer Yamaha)	240
6	Mark Eastwood (Wiseco Honda)	175
7	Jordan Rose (Albion KTM)	134
8	Danny Smyth (Wiseco Honda)	117
9	Jody Smyth (Wiseco Honda)	111
10	Glen Phillips (GP-MX Kawasaki)	107

MX2

1	Mike Brown (CAS Honda)	268 points
2	Gareth Swanepoel (Molson Kawasaki)	267
3	Tommy Searle (Red Bull KTM)	266
4	Shaun Simpson (Wulfsport Kawasaki)	247
5	Tom Church (Molson Kawasaki)	241
6	Martin Barr (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	191
7	Jason Dougan (Fork Rent Suzuki)	184
8	Carl Nunn (Bike It/Dixon Yamaha)	179
9	Sean Hamblin (Swift Suzuki)	159
10	Lewis Gregory (Relentless Suzuki)	130



DDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD
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STEVIE WONDER!

Cairolì moves closer to his second MX2 title, Coppins gets bounced in Czecho and Swordy's crowned the comeback king

Words by Alex Hodgkinson Photo by rayarcher.com

WORDY IS BACK! Okay, it's just fourth but – hold on – he was on sticks for 12 months, didn't even know if he would ever ride again and in his second GP back he only misses the podium by one. Now that's what we call a stunning return to the top class!

"Yes, I'm happy with that," is a typical understatement from the Scot who lets his performances on track do the talking after he finishes at Loket with a 10-5 card. "I tightened up in the middle of the first race but I just dropped back a little from Tarroux, rode my own lines and had loosened up again in the last few laps." And just to prove the reflexes are spot on again, Swordy holeshots the even damper race two, sticks in there for top five and again sees off his chasers in the closing laps.

There's plenty more happening in the GPs this month. At Faenza in Italy the Pourcel brothers create a bit of history when they take both classes while Tommy Searle gets another podium in Czecho after seeing off world champ Christophe at the end of race one. "It was a difficult track to pass so when he came up on me with three laps to go I decided to trick him. I dropped my speed so he thought I was tired and he dropped his too. Then I went again and he couldn't pick up the pace again. He's passed me enough times for this year!"

The Yamaha boys are in the news too. Both Tony Cairolì and Josh Coppins strengthen their grasp without winning at Faenza but Tony turns up in Czecho with his left index finger in a support. "I hit a post last week and broke it. I'm glad this track flows and I don't need to clutch too much." But he overjumps a tabletop in race two, can't pull in the clutch and crashes to lose the GP to Nico Aubin but he only needs 28 more than Pourcel at Namur to wrap it up.

Josh is feeling confident after posting sixth time on Saturday. "I lost both GPs when I was on pole but I won from sixth and seventh. The points are tomorrow!"

But there are none for Josh! First a rock jams the rear brake and costs him a lap, then he crashes in race two, has blood streaming from his eyebrow and lands hard on his shoulder. Steady Steve Ramon collides with Barragan and only picks up 30 so the gap is still 77.

And while Ramon struggles his team-mate Kevin Strijbos – released from Suzuki for '08 on Friday – celebrates on Sunday with a double win.

Series standings

MX1

1	Josh Coppins (Yamaha Rinaldi)	445 points
2	Steve Ramon (Suzuki Geboers)	368
3	Sebastien Pourcel (GPKR Kawasaki)	322
4	David Philippaerts (Red Bull KTM)	312
5	Kevin Strijbos (Suzuki Geboers)	300
6	Jonathan Barragan (Red Bull KTM)	292
7	Ken De Dycker (CAS Honda)	276
8	Mike Brown (CAS Honda)	272
9	Tanel Leok (Motorex Kawasaki)	272
10	Billy MacKenzie (Motorex Kawasaki)	247
11	James Noble (Multitek Honda)	212
18	Gordon Crookard (PAR Homes Honda)	102
31	Brad Anderson (Pioneer Yamaha)	14

MX2

1	Antonio Cairolì (De Carli Yamaha)	533 points
2	Christophe Pourcel (GPKR Kawasaki)	411
3	Tyla Rattray (Red Bull KTM)	371
4	Tommy Searle (Red Bull KTM)	351
5	Pascal Leuret (NGS Honda)	320
6	Gareth Swanepoel (Molson Kawasaki)	265
7	Nicolas Aubin (Ricci Yamaha)	262
8	Matti Seistola (SRS Honda)	200
9	Kenneth Gundersen (Ricci Yamaha)	197
10	Anthony Boissiere (CLS Kawasaki)	171
13	Carl Nunn (Bike It Dixon Yamaha)	143
16	Tom Church (Molson Kawasaki)	97
17	Jason Dougan (Fork Rent Suzuki)	81
21	Sean Hamblin (Swift Suzuki)	76
24	Shaun Simpson (Wulfsport Kawasaki)	67
28	Martin Barr (Bike It Dixon Yamaha)	37
30	Stephen Sword (Molson Kawasaki)	31
34	Jake Nicholls (Fork Rent Suzuki)	10
43	Elliot Banks-Browne (Swift Suzuki)	1

Go Swordy! The Scot's awesome comeback continues and he just misses the podium in Loket

WHITE WASH!

As the '07 WEC season moves towards a close Finn Juha Salminen looks odds-on to claim a record-equalling seventh world championship

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

KTM FACTORY star Juha Salminen looks assured of a record equalling seventh enduro world title at the penultimate round of the '07 WEC series in Slovakia following the Finn's continued dominance of the E1 class at the GPs of USA and Canada.

With 12 wins from 12 starts, Salminen's advantage is massive 74 points. "Everything looks good for Slovakia but I'm not thinking about winning the championship," comments Juha. "Both events in North America went well and I'm just going to try and win in Slovakia like at all the other races."

Getting closest to Salminen at the WEC's two 'away' races is Italian Yamaha rider Simone Albergoni. Unable to dislodge the Finn from the top spot of the podium, Albergoni is the first of a trio of Yamaha riders along with Marc Germain and Cristobal Guerrero that are all in the hunt for the E1 class championship runner-up spot.

Honda-mounted Finn Mika Ahola continues to head towards his first ever WEC crown in the E2 class having fought tooth and nail with countryman Samuli Aro while in the States and Canada and now has a 26-point championship advantage.

With Mika winning both days in the US – as well the second day in Canada – the three-time ISDE winner is hoping that '07 will be his year. "I wanted to get good results in the US and Canada so that the pressure's on Samuli and not me when the championship starts again in Europe. I know I don't need to win every day now but I'm going to be pushing hard, I've waited long enough for a world title."

The closest championship fight of '07 up until the sixth round of the series is between E3 class KTM team-mates Ivan Cervantes and Marko Tarkkala. But when Tarkkala crashes out of the GP of Canada on day one Cervantes takes a big leap towards his third consecutive world title.

With the two riders claiming a day win each in the States, Cervantes wins twice in Canada to move 28 points clear at the top of class and is ready to extend that advantage when the series resumes in early September.

With Finnish and Spanish riders dominating the three senior classes, Brit Tom Sagar emerges as a rider of real international potential. He wins the Enduro Junior class on day two in the States before finishing on the podium on both days in Canada. With five podium finishes to his credit so far in his first season of WEC competition, Tom sits third in class behind Christophe Nambotin and reigning champion Joakim Ljunggren. "I'm getting more competitive on the enduro and motocross tests which is important and I know I have the speed to win now," says Tom. "I have a few things I need to work on before the next round but I'm confident now that I can do it."

Series standings

E1

1	Juha Salminen (KTM)	300 points
2	Simone Albergoni (Yamaha)	226
3	Marc Germain (Yamaha)	215
4	Cristobal Guerrero (Yamaha)	206
5	Alessandro Belometti (KTM)	196

E2

1	Mika Ahola (Honda)	280 points
2	Samuli Aro (KTM)	254
3	Johnny Aubert (Yamaha)	227
4	Fabien Planet (KTM)	196
5	Stefan Merriman (Aprilia)	188

E3

1	Ivan Cervantes (KTM)	280 points
2	Marko Tarkkala (KTM)	152
3	Bjorne Carlsson (Husaberg)	220
4	Seb Guillaume (Husqvarna)	217
5	Alessandro Botturi (Honda)	195

EJ

1	Joakim Ljunggren (Husaberg)	269 points
2	Christophe Nambotin (Gas Gas)	216
3	Tom Sagar (KTM)	205
4	Thomas Oldrati (KTM)	186
5	Marc Bourgeois (Husqvarna)	175

Johnny Aubert is on course for a FIM bronze gong in the E2 division









DRENCH WARFARE!

The '07 British Enduro Championship kicks off with a double dose of wet Wales

Words & photo by Jonty Edmunds

THE '07 Metzeler British Enduro Championship finally gets under way in mid-July with a good ole fashioned wet Welsh event kick-starting the five-round series. Followed just two weeks later by – yep, you guessed it – another wet Welsh event, Husqvarna's Si Wakely currently leads the provisional standings following a winning ride at round two.

But at the championship opening Hafren Enduro it's Finnish star Juha Salminen who claims a double event win as the six-time world champion shows exactly why he's viewed as one of the world's very best. Aboard his D3-Racing prepared E1 class machine Juha tops both days comfortably.

Despite topping the E1 class, as he's a 'foreigner' Juha is only eligible to score points in the British Open Enduro Championship which means victory in the E1 class is shared by KTM-mounted Greg Evans who tops the class on day one and Husqvarna's Daryl Bolter who wins on day two.

In the E2 class Tom Sagar makes sure he gets his championship off to the best possible start by winning on both days, despite a big practice crash before the event. Si Wakely places as runner-up to Tom on both days but is unable to match the pace of the former trials rider on day two and sees three riders place between him and Tom in the overall results. One of these riders is Euan McConnell who, just as he did on day one, tops the E3 class aboard his TM.

Moving from Mid to West Wales, the Tywi Enduro clashes with the sixth round of the '07 WEC series which means Salminen and Sagar are unable to compete, leaving the door open for another rider to put his name at the top of the result sheet.

With conditions every bit as wet and challenging at the Tywi Enduro as they were at the series opener, MPS Racing Husqvarna rider Si Wakely shows the form that has put him into the lead of this year's European Enduro Championship as he tops both days to claim his first ever BEC overall victory. But it's a close run thing as he wins the opening day by less than one second before going on to beat four-time world champion Paul Edmondson by four seconds on day two.

Finishing just over two hundredths of a second behind Si on day one, Jason Thomas puts in his best ever BEC result before dropping to seventh overall on day two. With Edmondson third in the overall results on day one, McConnell again finishes as the best E3 class rider with Greg Evans getting the better of Daryl Bolter top the E1 class.

Day two sees a shake-up of the results and while Wakely wins again and McConnell tops the E3 class it's Edmondson who finishes as overall runner-up to claim his best result of the championship so far with Bolter topping the E1 class in a strong third overall aboard his 125.

Series standings

Open champs

1	Si Wakely (Husqvarna)	65 points
2	Daryl Bolter (Husqvarna)	50
3	Euan McConnell (TM)	48
4	Greg Evans (KTM)	45
5	Paul Edmondson (Suzuki)	43
6	Juha Salminen (KTM)	40
7	Jason Thomas (Yamaha)	40
8	Tom Sagar (KTM)	34
9	Ed Jones (KTM)	33
10	Tim Lewis (TM)	23

Fast Eddy holds down fifth in the overall standings with two rounds run



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STORYSOFAR...

OUR NEW GUY MIKE GURNEY CHECKS OUT
THE ACTION FROM THE BIG FOUR SERIES



**Holeshot hero
Matt Moffat**



**Ben Watson – little
guy, big heart!**



**KTM awning
makes a run for it!**



**Leg dragging
Lewis Trickett**



**Alex Rockwell's in
awesome form**



**Mud, mud,
glorious mud**



**David Games leads
Willie Worden**



Have we seen a classic season of youth racing so far? To be honest I'm not really sure yet but one thing I do know for certain is that it was glorious in April as we kicked off the BYMX series with a round at Desertmartin that was superb in every way.

With the opening round of the Elite Youth Cup at Matchams proving to be such an outstanding success too it had all the makings of a real epic season of virtually back-to-back championship rounds across all four codes – that's BYMX, BSMA, Elite Youth Cup and British Masters.

Okay, so it didn't all pan out that way but we can blame the weather! Was it really fun in the mud? Well maybe one event was funny, two a bit of a novelty but week after week after week was a nightmare for sure!

Maybe along the way though some issues have arisen concerning the weather, the venues and the amount of youth nationals we are running (too many?). Perhaps lessons can be learnt to keep championship momentum moving and that's so important if we are to have creditable series.

At the end of the day though it could well

be a case of less is more. The BYMX and Masters have scored heavily with championships still largely running to the timetable and building into a massive crescendo for the final rounds. And the Elite group have impressed everyone with their fantastic set-up. Politics aside how did the racing look? In a word – blinding!

Be upstanding for Ben Watson – a little guy giving away age and some experience to the rest of the Junior 65 field but what a season so far! Who can forget that wheelie out of the start at Desertmartin that set the tone for the season ahead. All due respect though to Jack Heath, Callum Cooper and the rest of the Junior 65cc pilots – it's been extraordinary entertainment so far.

Matthew Fleming, Robbie Muscat, Jamie McCanney, Dan Thornhill and Scott Aldridge have completely different styles but all compliment each other in the chase for SW85cc silverware. Matthew – with his power, sheer muscle and physical presence – has looked absolutely awesome at times. The races at Culham and Brompton particularly stick in the memory.

Robbie has looked rapid, smooth and determined – a perfect combination for success. Then there's Jamie who's almost old school in the style of Graham Noyce – no economy of effort here, just out and out edgy exuberance on the limit all the time and a compulsive watch. Scott and Dan at different times and on different surfaces have pitched in with cracking race wins too.

If we are talking Big Wheel 85s we're talking big performances from 14-year-old Sam Davis. What a perfect marriage, the power of the Albion 150F Honda coupled to Sam's lightweight frame and his silky smooth, superb riding skills – the word winner sums it all up!

At the other end of the age and weight scale is one of the youngest guys in the field – Connor Walkley. Connor started the season as possibly the biggest 12-year-old in the world (only joking) but he has put in some truly impressive laps for a guy giving away so much advantage. If we are looking for a big name for the future it may well be Connor.

Josh Spinks, Richie Worral, Dan McCanney, James Hutchinson, Turbo Taylor,

High-flying
Connor Walkley



Matthew Fleming
drops in



Turbo Taylor's
right on it!



Jack Rowe, Dan Hutchinson, Alfie Smith and Luke Hawkins have all ridden well too – what talent in depth there is here.

A collective medal is deserved for the 125cc two-stroke guys who as a group have provided a 24-carat season of racing entertainment! Lewis Tombs, David Games, Will Worden, Lewis Trickett – consistency, speed and application all season and we ain't finished yet!

With Scott James and Dan Arnold possibly the best and quickest two runners out there but with differing hard luck stories, their appearances have been almost cameo but still truly amazing. I'm still not finished yet – there's also Nathan Rookes, Jack Rowland, Scott Elderfield and Brad Smith. Add it all up...job done...dynamite!

Rocky rules okay! That's the undeniable message the results have sent out in the top division. Alex Rockwell does the business week-in,

week-out – especially in his battles with Lewis King.

In some ways it's been a season to forget for Lewis but let's hear it for the young guns – Josh Waterman, Matt Moffat, Joe Gregory and especially Mel Pocock who's snapping at their heels and biting them off occasionally. Pontrilas and Haverigg returned scorching race wins for Mel and maybe next season's writing is on the wall for the young PAR Honda guy. Last but not least, Luke Remmer is doing his stuff largely outside of the youth championships but doing it in real style.

In conclusion – if I missed anyone out sincere apologies – hopefully the season keeps going from here and it stops raining so all four major championships can hit the heights for a real firecracker of a finale. Considering all the time, effort and heaps of cash families and riders alike throw at this sport they deserve that much at least... Not 'alf!

STORYSOFAR...

RAGE'S NEW GUY MIKE GURNEY FILLS US IN ON THE 2007 YOUTH SEASON

Words and photos by mikegurney.com

MAX!

THE RESULTS KEEP COMING FOR MAX – THAT'S PLENTY OF RACE WINS AND GRADE A SATS

Once again we were making that short train ride across the English channel and the few hour journey through France and Belgium to come to the flat land of Holland – but this time not for a Dutch championship but for the European championship in Markelo.

The points coming into this round were very close and with the track only getting used once or twice a year it was very hard sand but the bonus was that we had the European MX2 and MX3 championships racing with us so the track got really nice and rough.

Timed training went well and I don't know whether it was because Herman from Pro Grip gave me some brand new Cairoli replica goggles that maybe weren't just replicas – maybe they were the real thing giving me Cairoli speed!

In my first race I didn't have such a good start but quickly and smoothly worked my way to the front. I found out that some of the other riders had some problems so I was now in the points lead!

During the break between races it rained and the first turn was under a foot of water! They postponed our second race for a little while to let the diggers go to work on the first turn. They didn't take into consideration the rest of the track that was just as bad so it was very important to get a good start.

I had an awesome jump and was neck and neck with another rider going into the turn and thought I had the holeshot when the guy slipped off and his bike slid straight in front of me. There was nothing I could do except to accept my fate of being rammed by 39 other riders after cartwheeling through the air!

After I got back up I was 40 seconds behind the leader. With it being such a one-lined track it was especially hard to pass. After much hard work I climbed back to ninth place, third overall and surprisingly still second in the championship with less of a points gap than there was coming into the event. So it wasn't so bad after all!

There was only one week until the next round of the European championship so we went home and did some preparation.

I am sure most of you who have been following the GP series will know the famous track of Valkenswaard – Everts, Coppins and Cairoli have all been and won there and now it was my turn! The guys who made the track did a great job of it, putting in some really cool bits. I was having some good fun putting in some monster whips.

I had a good timed training to win my group but still had to go to the line in second because I was in group B. I got a bad start but still came out in about sixth. I quickly moved my way to the front and got around Jeffery Herlings who was running a great race, then I dragged out a nice 35-second lead by the finish.

In the second moto I got a cool start and almost got the holeshot. I was soon out in front again and with Jeffery having a bad start I just had to not crash. As a trophy I got a left clog! They are typical Dutch shoes that are bright yellow and made of wood! Isn't that weird? They said that when I win next year there I will get a right one. With such a great weekend I'm now only two points behind Jeffery in the championship.

The day after Valkenswaard was pretty weird too. This was because I didn't have to go to school because the summer holidays have started. Our Sats results got sent out and arrived at home when I was in Valkenswaard. I got six As in both Math and Science. My teachers said that we will get our English results when we go back.

It was my little brother's birthday. Taylor is now four years old and enjoyed his party playing with all his friends. Just after the party my dad had to drive the 26 hours to Bulgaria where we had two days at Sevlievo. I had already done a race there with the European champs but this was just our final prep for the world youth championships. I'll tell you all about that next time!

Max



DANDARES!

NORTH EASTERN RIDER DANIEL HUTCHINSON CHEWS THE CUD IN THE CORNISH COUNTRYSIDE WITH RAGE

Words and photos by still-mx.co.uk



Rage: This summer has been a nightmare as far as the weather is concerned – how badly has your season been affected?

DH: "I have always been able to cope in the wet conditions coming from up north so the bad weather has worked to my advantage – take Hawkstone Park (British Masters) for example. I didn't win a race but was always in the top three and came away with the overall win. I always seem to ride well in the wet, this may be down to my smooth riding style."

Rage: Which has been your best race so far this year?

DH: "I think I would say the first round of the Elite youth cup at Matchams. The weekend started out with second in qualifying and I knew I could go faster."

"The racing over that weekend was fast and hard, I took four holeshots out of five starts and kept pushing in every race – winning the third race and not being out of the top four in the others."

"I knew I had to finish fourth in the last moto to walk away with the overall but unfortunately I got a front wheel puncture and finished fifth – Sam Davies got me on the last lap. I still finished second overall and came away with one big smile on my face."

Rage: Speaking of times that have made you smile, which of your racing achievements mean most to you?

DH: "My last year in the Junior 65s I finished third overall in the BYMX series, I've won three Cumbrian championships – some of these I never lost a single race all season which I have been told no other rider has done this."

"I finished 12th in the BYMX in 2005 after having mechanical problem at the beginning of the series. I finished sixth in 2006 and achieved four race wins and one overall at Leuchars by making the pass of the year for the lead right in front of my supporters – the crowd went wild and that race still means the most to me. People still mention that pass I made even now."

Rage: So tracks like Leuchars suit you the best?

DH: "I think I am more suited to sand tracks – the deeper the better for me. Leuchars suits me

and I like the sand tracks in Holland and Belgium. If I had to pick a favourite it would be a track called Ruesel which is black sand."

Rage: If you could arrange your perfect motocross weekend and there were no limits on expense or who you could be with what would you do?

DH: "This one is hard, I think it would have to be a weekend training with Cairoli and Everts who are my two favourite riders. I'd take all my mates – James Hutchinson, Matt Moffat, Scat man Phil Tilly and Lee Goodfellow. What a ball we would have."

"I think I would have this at Southwick in America. I have only ever seen it on DVD but would love to be able to get out there and ride – you never know, maybe in the next few years I may make it. Of course we would have to have a private helicopter to take us back to the luxury hotel."

Rage: We're here at the second round of the Elite Youth Cup. It's still early days for the series but what do you think so far?

DH: "Matt Bates and his team are doing a brilliant job and the organisation is first class – other organisations could learn from them. The idea of having five races may not appeal to everyone but shows you it can be done. Keep the good work up and I will be back for more next year."

Rage: It's so important to be in peak condition to run at the top level. Is there a rider out there that you look up to for the amount of effort they put in?

DH: "I look up to all professional riders but I would have to say Brad Anderson who lives in the next village to me and is so focused on winning. I have watched Brad since I started motocross and I see him out on his road bike all the time."

"I remember when I was younger I asked him for some tips – this was at the Brompton track – and he said Daniel just hit everything flat out. At Hawkstone he commented on my riding and told me to keep up the good work, when that comes from someone at the top it means a lot. I guess he must be watching the young guns – look out, we're coming after you Brad!"

Rage: Where do you see yourself in say five years time?
DH: "I will be 19 so I'm hoping to be doing GPs if everything goes to plan. Basically I know everyone wishes this but I would like to be racing full time in the States."

Rage: Is there anyone you'd like to thank for the help and support they give you?
DH: "Firstly it has to be my mam and dad – they put a lot of time and effort in for me. My dad works away so my mam has everything to do. I'd like to thank Stu Storey and Micheal at SS Motocross, Geoff at Kawasaki Newcastle, Mark for the Lazer Helmets, Kevin of Custom Lids Newcastle, Ashley Kane of Madison for the new deal with Thor race wear, Roland at Hardcore Racing, Big Trev, Dave and Maureen, Willie Craig and Debbie Cook."

"They're the people who help when my dad is away so it's a big thank you to you all. Last but not least a big thanks to Jimmy Aird of Scott Leathers who has helped me with Spirit race wear for the last five seasons."



MASTERS OF MOTOCROSS

CORSHAM SSC CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF SCHOOLIE SCRAMBLING SHENANIGANS!

It's amazing to think that the Corsham club has been running youth motocross races for 40 years – that's longer than T+MX News has existed and potentially means that the grandparents of the current crop of youth racers could have been Corsham schoolboy scramblers themselves!

The Masters of Motocross event at Marshfield is the highlight of Corsham's 2007 season with over 200 riders turning out to celebrate the club's 40th Anniversary. And despite heavy rain and flooding affecting neighbouring parts of the country, the Adrian Smith chaired club manage to squeeze in five blocks of racing over the two days.

A clash with a round of the Elite Youth Cup keeps some of the faster club members away but the racing is still fast and furious none the less. For more details on this event and the Corsham club log on to corshamssc.co.uk



Declan Whittle giving it beans!

www.ridemx.co.uk

HAPPY SNAPPERS!

WIN A ROB HERRING TRAINING DAY WITH RIDE MX IN OUR FANTABULOUS MONTHLY COMPETITION

Bar lastings berms is one of 10-year-old mini warrior Declan Whittle's favourite things and that's why he's our latest winner of a Rob Herring/Ride MX training day voucher thanks to this cool shot of him shredding it up for Jimmy at www.mxfan.co.uk's camera.

And if you want your picture printed in DBR and a Rob Herring training day voucher of your own send us your favourite riding shot – maybe of you busting a berm, pulling a sick whip or simply gooning it up. If your picture is deemed to be the best by our expert panel of judges you'll not only win a Ride MX training voucher that's worth £75 but you'll also get your picture published in next month's Rage.

Because copyright fraud is a serious issue we definitely don't want to see watermarked shots whipped from a website.

So when you've chosen your favourite shot and you have the photographer's permission to send it to us we want you to either fill in the coupon below and send the photo and form to us at Happy Snappers, DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancashire, LA4 4AG or enter online at www.dirtbikerider.com

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

A DAY AT THE RACES WITH MAX ANSTIE

As the end of the Maxxis British motocross championship nears Kawasaki Motors UK would like to offer one of our Rage readers the opportunity to come along to the final round at Pontrilas near Hereford on September 15.

The lucky winner will meet riders from the Molson Kawasaki team, the Team Green squad, Twisted-7 Kawasaki, MotoXtreme Kawasaki, Wulfspor Kawasaki and of course factory MX1 rider Billy MacKenzie. And if that's not enough excitement they'll also be taken around the track by Rage's very own columnist Max Anstie and given some inside information on tackling the track's jumps, twists and turns.

To win this brilliant prize all you have to do is answer this simple question.

What bike is Max Anstie currently campaigning in the European championship on?

- Is it: A) KX65
 B) KX125
 C) KX250F
 D) KX85

When you think you've figured out the answer log on to dirtbikerider.com and follow the links to the competition page and answer it there – don't forget to tick the box that lets us know you agree with all the terms and conditions. The first correct entry picked randomly after the closing date of September 5 will win the prize.

Happy Snappers

Name.....

Age.....

Postal address.....

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Daytime telephone number.....

Email.....

Photographer's name.....

Photographer's tel number.....

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GOOD TIMES!

HARD TRAINING, SOLID RESULTS AND SOME R N' R WITH TOMMY GUN HAVE GOT BILLY PUMPED TO FINISH THE SEASON IN STYLE



I'VE BEEN staying in Derby recently with Lord Dobb and Mr Searle, I came down after Whitby to join in with their regime after Jamie had been on at me forever! It was actually planned before Japan because I was riding like such a jebend but since I won I figured it wasn't necessary! However, after having Jamie on the phone he did make it sound really good so I packed my bags and off I went.

Since I've been here it's been non-stop banter with Tommy and his mate Ed. The first couple days I turned up was the weekend we had off so I was escorted round all three major towns by these pair of nut jobs. Hidden in Tommy's van was a speaker phone, one of them big ones that you can turn the volume up and stuff. Heading into town, Ed was hanging out the window asking the public how their day was – to their complete humiliation! Any nice girls were immediately hit with some cheesy chat up line in front of crowds of people! Driving through the centre of town he would tell the queue outside bus stops and fuel stations that there was a delay in the bus timetable or that there was free fuel from pump number six – I was crying laughing! In the beginning it was one of those situations where you slump down in your seat so not to be seen but in the end I was joining in and cheering people up with some friendly banter. Most people were loving it – they smile and chat back – but it did depend on the town. Derby was really friendly but Loughborough was a chav-ridden cesspit so the friendly banter turned into abuse and we hoped the traffic lights stayed green!

I'm staying at Marco Melandrie's house – him and JD are best buds and he likes to have someone staying in his house while he is out the country so it was perfect really. The plan is to stay here and build up for a double British win for me and Tommy at Donington. So it's pretty cool – me and Tommy are riding and training together so if all goes to plan we

will help each other out and give you guys what you want at Donington! We've been out riding loads the last two weeks. Ed has his own track that we go to most days, him and Tommy have built it themselves so it's got some pretty sweet sections – pretty much everything you need in one track. We built a massive double today, it was sick! Check out mine and Tommy's MySpaces for the pics. We spent all day just throwing down some huge whips (after our motos of course) – it's good to let loose and have some fun some days.

The last few races have all been not bad. Italy I was fourth overall, Whitby I ended up with the win after the second race was stopped and in Czecho I got seventh. Starting to throw some consistency in there now after my shocking start to the season. I worked it out – if I had scored 15 points in the only five races I've not scored points I would be second in the championship right now and with Josh injured now that is a pretty s**t thing to think about. Only 15 points! That's a sixth place! Gutted! I'll keep those thoughts for winter training this year.

It feels like the season has gone so fast I'm already thinking of what I need to do for next year to be world champion, I want it so bad. I love being on the 450, I've not crashed nearly as much (touch wood) and I feel so much stronger than I have done in the past.

It's Namur this weekend then I head home for a week. With the Edinburgh Festival started, home is the place to be right now. I'm gonna head there between Brampton and Ireland for some good banter with Bry and the lads – I'm even gonna bring Luka up to show him how it's done in Edinburgh. So I'm looking forward to lots of training, riding, comedians, bands etc. Luka is gonna love it!

BD 12/11





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